THE
CHR

Jesuit-Krauss-McCormick Library
BR50 .M3
Marchant, James, Sir, 1867-1956. MAIN
The future of Christianity / edited by S
3 9967 00084 7744

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS VOLUME

Rt. Rev. Arthur C. Headlam, C.H., D.D., Bishop of Gloucester.

Rev. Sydney Cave, D.D., President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge.

Principal Wheeler Robinson, D.D., Regent's Park College.

Principal R. S. Franks, D.Litt., Western College, Bristol.

The Most Rev. C. F. D'Arcy, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh.

Rev. W. R. Matthews, D.D., Dean of King's College, London.

Professor H. R. Mackintosh, D.D., New College, Edinburgh.

Rev. C. E. Raven, D.D., Canon of Liverpool.

Professor A. S. Peake, D.D., The University of Manchester.

Rev. F. R. Tennant, D.D., Trinity College, Cambridge.

Principal A. E. Garvie, M.A., D.D., Hackney and New College, London.

Rev. Vernon F. Storr, M.A., Canon of Westminster.

Rev. H. Sloane Coffin, D.D., President of Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Principal W. F. Lofthouse, D.D., Handsworth College.

Dr. Garfield H. Williams, Secretary, Missionary Council, Church Assembly.

AUGUSTANA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY ROCK ISLAND ILLINOIS

THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

EDITED BY
SIR JAMES MARCHANT, K.B.E., LL.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE
RT. REV. ARTHUR C. HEADLAM, C.H., D.D.
BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
MCMXXVII

AUGUSTANA THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY LIBRARY
ROCK ISLAND ILLINOIS

BR
50
.M3

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE writers of these essays have met together and discussed the design and object of this volume, and there have been other interchanges of thought. A glance at the contents will at once reveal their common mind and way of approach to the various subjects treated. It should be understood however that each writer is alone responsible for his essay. But there is general agreement amongst the writers that the modern re-statement of doctrine must begin from the data of experience.

The Bishop of Gloucester, in his general Introduction, in which he emphasizes their unity, and expresses his personal agreement or disagreement with the arguments used, happily calls attention to the significance of this co-operation of scholars, partly belonging to the Church of England, and partly Free Churchmen who are daily engaged in teaching, on similar lines, in connection with the Theological Faculties of our Universities. They here express a common body of wise and sober teaching, which will prepare the way for further united work on the re-statement of Christian Truths in the light of modern knowledge, and for the united evangelization of the world.

It may be stated that this closer co-operation has been one of the primary objects of the Editor in promoting this volume upon "The Future of Christianity," and the hope is well founded that the group of writers here drawn together will continue their labours on other occasions.

J. M.

51974

CONTENTS

Pages

INTRODUCTION. BY THE RT. REV. ARTHUR C. HEADLAM, C.H., D.D., BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER xxv–xxxix

CHAPTER I

CHRISTIANITY IN RELATION TO OTHER RELIGIONS. BY SYDNEY CAVE, D.D., PRESIDENT OF CHESHUNT COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Why the "Future of Christianity" and not the "Future of Religion"? That is a problem which the contraction of the modern world has made too urgent to be evaded.

I. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islām have in recent years been radically transformed through the permeating influence of Christian ideas. Should we be content with this, or must we claim for Christianity a unique and final place, and, if so, in what sense? 3–14

II. Statement and criticism of Troeltsch's view that although Christianity is valid for us now in Europe, it is not necessarily "unsurpassable," nor can it displace the ancient religions of the East 14–19

III. The problem ultimately one of the nature and truth of the Christian message. If God be truly known in Christ, then Christianity is all the world's concern. Such a claim should lead not to arrogance, but to penitence, for much of the resentment which this claim arouses is due to our corporate failure to live by Christian values 19–25

CHAPTER II

Pages

THE VALIDITY OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE. BY PRINCIPAL WHEELER ROBINSON, D.D., REGENT'S PARK COLLEGE

I. Modern theology appeals to experience, and is interpretative of the modern religious emphasis, which is pragmatic; but vital religion has always been experiential, and experience is not antithetical to Bible and Church. Historical criticism of both, however, has thrown a new emphasis on the experience from which they emerged. The ultimate authority of truth, even of "revealed" truth, must be intrinsic 26–32

II. This resort to experience constitutes the "epistemology" of theology. There is a "given" in Christian experience, which faith interprets as fellowship with God through Christ—a Real Presence, a present activity of God through His Spirit 32–34

III. "Is religion an illusion?" This question is raised anew by the psychological study of "origins." A projection may be a projection towards a real object. Religious experience can claim to be as "real" as experience of the material world, for it can meet the same tests of persistence, congruity and general agreement. But objective spiritual values imply Personality, other than human, as their necessary Subject 34–39

IV. The historical data of the Christian faith are essential to its nature, though the entanglement of personal faith with the facts of history raises difficulties. These are overcome only when we recognize the unity and unifying nature of the experience 39–42

Pages

V. The experience involves more than intellectual factors. The character of God is known only as it is shared, so that there is a moral as well as an intellectual challenge. Intellectual difficulties, as a disguise of truth, may thus be regarded as a necessary part of the divine discipline in creating character 42–45

VI. "The Future of Christianity" will test our reconstructions in their interaction with the practical work of preaching and applying the Gospel 45–47

CHAPTER III

THE PRESENT RELATIONS BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY. BY PRINCIPAL R. S. FRANKS, D.LITT., WESTERN COLLEGE, BRISTOL

I. Introduction. Importance of the subject. Philosophical meaning of the modern theological appeal to experience 48–51

II. The historical explanation of this appeal. The theological situation before and after Kant. The position of Schleiermacher in theology and in philosophy 51–57

III. The permanent value of Schleiermacher's psychology of religion. Later developments have not essentially affected this 57–59

IV. The abiding worth of Schleiermacher's philosophy. It can compete successfully with other modern philosophical types, but under present-day conditions it requires restatement. The place of the Holy in the world-scheme 59–69

V. Conclusion. The relation and the distinction of philosophy and theology 69–70

CHAPTER IV

Pages

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD. BY MOST REV. C. F. D'ARCY, D.D., ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH

I. Three developments of modern knowledge must be considered in relation to this greatest of all questions :
   (1) The modern scientific view of the Universe and its history.
   (2) The comparative study of Religions as regards their origin, history and relation to one another.
   (3) The psychological study of religious experience 71–77

II. The most urgent question is : Can the Christian conception of God and the experience which corresponds to it stand the test of critical examination in view of these ? 77–79

III. It is necessary to consider the following :
   (1) The mechanical conception of natural processes, and the function of mechanism in human experience.
   (2) The problems of pain and moral evil in relation to the evolutionary view of the creative process.
   (3) The implications of the order of Creation as revealed by Science 79–88

IV. Finally, it is necessary to bring into relation the peculiar quality of the Christian experience and the principles which are involved in the spiritual interpretation of the Creative process 88–89

V. There results a conception which has closer affinity to Christian Theism than to any doctrine of Deism or Pantheism 89–91

CHAPTER V

Pages

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST. BY W. R. MATTHEWS, D.D., DEAN OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON

Our estimate of the Person of Christ will be a determining factor in the view we shall take of the future of Christianity.

The need for a clear recognition of the difference which modern science has made in our conceptions of the structure of the Universe.

Two groups of problems to be considered: historical and philosophical. The latter group more fundamental 92–94

I. The importance of the question, What did Jesus think of Himself? The so-called "claims" of Jesus. The preaching of the Kingdom and His own place within the Kingdom. The general nature of the conception of the Kingdom.

The Messianic Consciousness and its connection with the suffering Servant of God and the "woes of the Messiah."

The manner of Christ's teaching and other confirmatory evidence.

Summary of evidence concerning Christ's self-consciousness.

Hypothesis that He was deluded or misinterpreted open to serious objections.

The problem presented to us by the Person of Jesus.

St. Paul and other New Testament writers agree in their attitude towards Jesus though they differ in their theological impressions. Summary of Pauline doctrine and evidence that it was in accordance with the belief of the Church as a whole.

Intellectual problems left unsolved by the New Testament.

A brief review of the Christological contro-

Pages

versies. The negative character of the dogmatic decisions. Permanent value of the Catholic creeds.

"There is no revealed philosophy." Peculiar disadvantages of the Greek philosophy for the formulation of the Christian faith.

The assumed absolute distinction between God and man.

The insoluble problem of the two Natures issues in the impasse of the controversy about the two Wills.

The need for a modern Christology 94–110

II. The proposal to dispense with metaphysics considered. The method of Catholic theology justified.

Modern Theism has been profoundly affected by evolutionary theories. The conception of "emergent" evolution. This is not really inconsistent with teleology or with transcendence.

Can an absolute appear within evolution? The cases of Dante and Professor Alexander examined.

The importance of the conception of Divine Immanence. The relation of God to the world. Defects of scholastic Theology on the subject of creation. Self-limitation and self-expression. Characteristic feature of the upward movement of evolution—the overcoming of negation.

Personality and evolution. In the light of Ethical Monotheism.

The conception of "substance." New "dynamic" conceptions.

Giovanni Gentile on the Transcendental Ego. The "pure act" the basis of the person and of evolution.

"The Christ in the ordinary man." What is a "mere man"?

Pages

The Person of Christ the revelation of God and man. The notes of unity through plurality and the transcendence of negativity. The forms of negativity and their overcoming in Christ. This view not to be interpreted as meaning that Christ is only an example of the life of the Logos.

Short summary of the argument of the second part of this essay.

Questions which still remain to be answered.

Concluding remarks on the practical results of a view of the Person of Christ such as here advocated 110–124

CHAPTER VI

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. BY PROFESSOR H. R. MACKINTOSH, D.D., NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH

I. The Spirit, or God acting in the world to communicate His own life, is a pre-condition of Christian faith. Modern thought on the subject rightly attaches itself to the great Biblical convictions, as they come to light progressively in the prophets, in Jesus, and in the apostolic believers. The ancient Church did well to state firmly the essential unity of the Spirit with God 125–133

II. The term Spirit best describes the Divine power whereby men are made partakers of the life of God. That presence is the true safeguard against traditionalism and magical views of grace, for it has its correlative in living truth 133–136

III. The " Spirit of Christ," as conceived in the New Testament, is the Spirit displayed and imparted by Christ ; it is also the Spirit that bears testimony to Him. Faith is the index,

Pages

and the Church the characteristic sphere, of the Spirit's action. Here is the fulfilment of man's hunger for Union with God, and the assured promise that the Church will not fail in its world-embracing task 136–140

IV. The Spirit has a wider ministry in inspiring all endeavour to realize goodness, truth and beauty; but in stressing this we must not again lose the perspective of the New Testament. The personal character of the Spirit 140–146

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS. BY C. E. RAVEN, D.D., CANON OF LIVERPOOL

I. If the first epoch of Christianity emphasized the institutional and the second the individual aspect, our age has to achieve a synthesis: agreement as to the sacramental principle or relation of inward to outward a preliminary to this task. Much present practice both among Catholics and Protestants inconsistent with this 147–154

II. The Church itself an example of the sacramental is an organism rather than an organization, and as such must have the qualities of continuity and of growth. The difficulty of preserving both is not insuperable 154–157

III. The Sacraments when studied show where this difficulty lies. They are not, as some maintain, mere symbols which can be neglected without real loss; nor are they breaches of the natural order, unique and isolated 157–160

IV. The "Great Church" and a reasonable sacramentalism hold the future 160–163

CHAPTER VIII

Pages

THE NATURE AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE. BY PROFESSOR A. S. PEAKE, D.D., THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

I. The traditional theory of Scripture has been discredited by physical and biological Science, by anthropology, archæology and Comparative Religion, by the History of the Canon, by Lower, Higher and Historical Criticism, and by Biblical Theology. The problem of its authority is best approached through an inquiry into its nature, which must be independent of all preconceived theories 164–167

II. We learn from an inspection of the contents of the Bible that revelation is primarily not the communication of spiritual truths or moral principles. The inclusion of so much narrative gives us our clue. Revelation is a process in history; life, not language, is its chief medium. This is seen most clearly at the climax. Jesus Himself, His personality and action, were a far fuller and more vivid disclosure of God than were even His incomparable words. And this was characteristic of the whole preparatory process in Israel. National history was at first its medium, but for its higher reaches individual experience was necessary. The process was very gradual owing to the mixed and imperfect quality of the medium. Hence the limitations of the Old Testament present no religious or moral difficulties to us. The development of Israel's religion was Divinely guided from first to last towards its consummation in Jesus 167–173

III. The Old Testament and the New are organically united. This may be demonstrated by a sketch of the development, the national his-

Pages

tory, both in the unfolding of its native qualities and its reaction to its foreign environment, profoundly affecting the development of the Hebrew religion. Here the chief points are the deliverance from Egypt, the covenant with Yahweh in the wilderness, the settlement in Canaan and the religious peril of the transition to agriculture and the worship of the Baalim, the constant warfare, the danger from the Philistines, the creation of the monarchy, the disruption of the Kingdom, the alliance with Tyre and the cult of the Tyrian Baal, the long disastrous war with Syria, the triumph of Israel and its morally calamitous results, the new peril from the great empires, the destruction of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria, the survival of Judah, its downfall and Exile, its Return, the fortunes of the people under Persia and Greece. We can trace the reaction of all these on the development of the religion. But this was profoundly affected also by great personalities such as Moses, Isaiah and Ezekiel, Hosea and Jeremiah, the great Psalmists and the author of *Job*. In the New Testament this is true also of Paul, whose experience was the source of the most distinctive elements in his theology. But while revelation came through history and experience, interpretation was also needed ; and the whole complex process had to be recorded if the revelation was to be protected against addition, mutilation and distortion 173–180

IV. We cannot assert that throughout Scripture we have the direct utterance of the Holy Spirit, nor that a single self-consistent system of truth lies behind the whole of it. Its unity is rather that of a process. Its importance lies supremely in the whole rather than in the parts, valuable as these may be. Authority

Pages

in doctrine and morals belongs primarily to the New Testament, and here specially in its central affirmations. But we must not attach undue weight to external guarantees; the Divinely-illuminated conscience and reason recognize the Divine utterance in Scripture. While it is a mere eccentricity to say that the Church wrote the New Testament, the Church, in the formation of the Canon, guarantees it. Israel and the Church similarly guarantee the Old Testament. The Hebrew Scriptures unite religion and morality, repudiate idolatry, affirm monotheism with its implicit universalism (though here nationalism thwarted its witness), created a fine personal religion, trained the sense of sin and gave the assurance of God's grace, was inspired by enthusiasm for social righteousness and hatred of cruelty and oppression. These are taken up in the New Testament, but deepened. Universalism comes to its own; works and merit are replaced by grace and faith; the external law is replaced by the indwelling Christ, and morality rises to a supra-legal level. Its supreme advance is that revelation attains its climax in Jesus and the solution of our moral and religious problems is found in Him. The Bible is the classic of our religion, the only source from which we can derive our knowledge of revelation and the central personality of our faith. Its authority suffices for our legitimate needs 180–185

CHAPTER IX

RACIAL AND INDIVIDUAL SIN. BY F. R. TENNANT, D.D., TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

There are three factors of moral character: the Soul, Inheritance, and Social Environment.

Pages

I. The Soul: its existence, nature, freedom. Origin and embodiment of souls.
The limit to human responsibility and to solution of the problems of evil 186–190

II. Mental Heredity. "Original" applies not to sin but to non-moral promptings. "Universal" sinfulness is explicable without any kind of doctrine as to a Fall of Man. Evolution abolishes mystery 190–194

III. The Social Factor: conscience and moral law. These, together with appetitive impulse and volition are the conditions of the moral status and of the possibility of actual sin. Sin is not to be identified with imperfection: nor with sin-consciousness.
Social Sin is reducible to the sin of communicating individuals 194–202

CHAPTER X

FORGIVENESS AND ATONEMENT. BY PRINCIPAL A. E. GARVIE, M.A., D.D., HACKNEY AND NEW COLLEGE, LONDON

I. Sin may be regarded from the religious as well as the moral point of view. Judging sin from the religious point of view, the standard to be applied is the Divine purpose for man; and man's sin, his need of redemption, is measured by his failure to fulfil that purpose 203–206

II. Forgiveness is not primarily the removal of the consequences of sin, but essentially the cancelling of the guilt of sin in the restoration of the personal relation between God and man, which sin disturbs; and this restoration involves a new standard, a new motive, and a

Pages

new power, the result of which is holiness, the end of forgiveness 206–215

III. This forgiveness, and its consequent holiness, is mediated by Christ, not only in His Cross, but also in His earthly life and His heavenly reign ; and His mediation in the Cross can be expressed in the terms redemption, reconciliation and propitiation. The fact of the Atonement includes on the one hand Christ's experience, and on the other the believer's in Him ; and the theory is the explanation of the necessity of and the efficacy for Atonement of the Cross : in this theory we must not oppose the relation of the death to God and to man, since what impresses man is what expresses God in the Cross—His judgment on in His forgiveness of sin—so that in Christ man is brought into unity of life with God 215–224

CHAPTER XI

ETERNAL LIFE. BY VERNON F. STORR, M.A., CANON OF WESTMINSTER

I. Immortality more than mere survival—The Hebrew conception of Sheol and dawn of a richer belief—The nature of the modern argument for immortality 225–231

II. Eternal Life and Spiritual Values—The Meaning of Eternal Life—Science and Immortality—Evolution and Theism—Evolution and Teleology 231–238

III. The Rise of Individuality—The Problem of Variability—Directed Evolution—Are all men immortal ?—Soul and Body—The Meaning of Soul—The argument for personal survival cumulative 238–250

CHAPTER XII

Pages

THE GOSPEL AND MODERN LIFE. BY H. SLOANE COFFIN, D.D., PRESIDENT OF UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK

The Gospel is everlasting because it answers perennial needs, but it adapts itself to current phases of thought. Modern life is affected by four chief factors: the scientific attitude, democracy, the industrial organization of the world, and the rise of psychology. These factors partly help and partly hinder the Gospel. 251–252

I. Science rests on an underlying faith, which the Gospel makes explicit. The Gospel submits to scientific methods of verification. The gains of science require the Gospel to produce men who can use them aright.

II. Democracy assumes a threefold faith, and the Gospel supplies it in its Triune God.

III. The industrial organization of mankind demands an ethic which it not only cannot create but debases. The Gospel can furnish it, but the Gospel is also a protest against the industrial order, a programme of a more fraternal day, and a promise of its coming.

IV. Psychology exposes needs which the Gospel has assumed. Psychology describes the spirit of man undergoing religious experiences, and can aid in guiding and appraising them. Its attempt to explain them in mechanistic terms repeats an ancient blunder. Like other sciences it must remain within its scientific domain, and accord the Gospel its distinctive place as redemptive power 252–264

CHAPTER XIII

THE GOSPEL IN HUMAN SOCIETY. BY PRINCIPAL W. F. LOFTHOUSE, D.D., HANDSWORTH COLLEGE

I. The Church has often been thought of as a company of individuals rescued from a lost and

Pages

ruined world. But the Old Testament contains a gospel of deliverance for human society, though only the society of Israel 265–268

II. To the New Testament, the conception of the Kingdom of God, the ideal of a redeemed society in right relations to God, is essential. This ideal was forgotten both in the early ages of the Church and after the conversion of the Roman Empire, and, later, by Catholics, claiming to secure the salvation of individuals in communion with the Church, and Evangelicals, emphasizing the justification of the individual by faith. The various social movements and reforms which sections of the Church have inspired, have also stopped short of this ideal. Christianity stands for more than conduct of a certain kind; for reconciliation and fellowship, which imply a society that is Christian 268–280

III. The study of society points to the action of the Spirit of God, distinct from the conscious efforts of men. But the saved individual needs a saved society in order to a perfect life. This involves a new emphasis on repentance, and on sin; but sin, not confined to the defiance by the individual of some known law of God, includes a wrong attitude towards both God and humanity 280–282

IV. Thus, the end of the Christian's activity will be the development of a society wherein justice and mercy are the laws of all its members to one another. In the world as it now is, the Gospel bids, and enables, men to become reconciled to one another, and, in the true fellowship of the Spirit, to learn to share all that they have that is worth sharing, as it can best be shared 282–285

CHAPTER XIV

Pages

THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD. BY DR. GARFIELD WILLIAMS, SECRETARY, MISSIONARY COUNCIL, CHURCH ASSEMBLY

I. Christianity claims to be the world religion. This does not preclude recognition of much that is good in other religions 286–288

II. Our aim in the evangelization of the world is the winning of personal allegiance to Christ. True conversion to Christianity is essentially the work of the Holy Spirit 288–289

III. Blind acceptance of the religion of the Western world is not desirable, for it would be an acceptance of a defective Christianity. Consciousness of this one of the great personal problems of the evangelist 289–292

The problem not solved by the resort to "oracular" authority, but its difficulty lessened by (1) a calm acceptance of the partial character of his own understanding and practice of Christianity; (2) a realization that he is in debt to all the world in respect of all that he has which seems to him worth the giving; and (3) the certainty that much of what he is giving he gives as an inheritance from the past with the weight of long tradition behind it and proofs of its effectiveness all down the ages.

IV. The emergence of different traditions and the resultant diversity of view expressed by preachers of the evangel. Both good and bad elements in this lack of a united front 292–293

V. Amid all divergence of view there is the fundamental fact of the historic Christ and the certainty that God is working His purpose out 293–294

Pages

VI. It is a hopeful sign of the times that men at last realize that Christ is the only hope of the world and that in the giving of Christ to the world rests the only hope of the Church 294–295

VII. New forces that have been let loose in the world in this modern age are making us think in terms of the whole world and indicate more clearly than ever before the world's need of Christ 295–298

VIII. The great changes that are taking place all over the world, while they clearly indicate the need of its evangelization and apparently simplify the process, actually make the work of evangelization increasingly difficult, and the criticism of the missionaries' work inevitable 298–300

IX. The greatest danger to the Church is that she should fail to count the cost of world evangelization 300

INTRODUCTION

BY THE BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER

WHAT do we mean by discussing the future of Christianity? I suppose that there are two questions to which we desire an answer. The one could not be asked by any sincere believer, but is, I think, often in the mind of that large body of cultivated or semi-cultivated people who live on the fringe of the Christian Church, who take a half-hearted interest in its activity, who give a half-hearted adherence to its teaching and often assume an attitude of intellectual superiority towards it. They want to know whether what they call the results of modern thought, the discoveries of science, and the speculations of philosophy are such as to make us seriously doubt whether the Christian Revelation is really true, and therefore whether in future generations it will be accepted as a religion and rule of life.

The second question is under what form Christianity will be accepted in the future. We know that it has been presented in different guises in different times and places. The religion of the Fathers was not, in appearance at any rate, like that of the Schoolmen; the religion of the Romanist seems to differ from that of the Puritan. The thought of each period, often the product of Christian teaching, has conditioned

the manner in which that teaching has been put forward. Much of that which each age looks upon as an essential part of the Christian message is found really to be transient and ephemeral. It is therefore a legitimate subject of speculation to consider what relation the Christian Gospel as we know it bears to the thought of the present day, what are the tendencies of philosophy and science in the future, and how they are likely to influence religious teaching.

It is, I take it, with these two questions that the writers of this book are concerned, and the intent of it lies in the fact that it is the first attempt to do this made by a body of men who are some of them members of the Church of England and some of other religious communities. There have been statements of the Christian message made in the Church of England by High Churchmen, and Evangelicals, and Modernists. Here we have one written by distinguished writers of high academic position and intellectual capacity, representing Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Wesleyans. I think this fact is of some significance.

Before we proceed further there is a point which needs discussion. What is the relation of Christianity to scientific or philosophical speculation? We might put it in this way: What is the comparative weight of the authority of Christianity and of that of modern thought? People sometimes talk as if the test of truth was its conformity to the fashion of thought of the day. A few minutes' reflection will show how erroneous that position is. I remember reading lately an article by a distinguished man of science in which he contrasted the changeableness of Christian teach-

ing with the certainty of science. Is that position really justified?

Now in the first place, if we look at the essential and fundamental teaching of Christianity there can be no manner of uncertainty what it is for; it has never varied. It puts forward a rule of faith and life based on certain fundamental truths—God, the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ the Son of God, the immanence of God in the world through His Holy Spirit, the supreme value of the Atoning death of Christ, the fundamental principles of Christian Morality, Righteousness, Duty, Love, Sacrifice, the belief in Judgment and Immortality—on all these points there has never been any doubt or variation. There has been great diversity of theological speculation; the form in which Christianity has presented itself to the world has varied greatly, but as regards the faith there has been no variation. It is the same faith which was taught in the second century, that is taught in the twentieth. The faith of Athanasius and Aquinas, of Luther and of Newman, was the same. There is no difference on these fundamental points between Romanist and Anglican, Orthodox and Evangelical, Lutheran and Calvinist, Wesleyan and Baptist. The agreed authority of the Christian Church is one of the most impressive facts in human history.

It is not in fact Christianity that varies but science and philosophy. The scientific man at the present day generally talks as if there was on the one side something fixed, certain, undoubted scientific truth; on the other side something vague, changing, and therefore doubtful—religion. It is curious how easily

people become self-deluded. A hundred years ago, scientific men taught and thought in exactly the same spirit, but how much of what they taught then do we accept now? Just about forty years ago I learned a great deal of the results of scientific thought as they were taught at that time, and I am finding myself constantly compelled to change my conceptions. A large part of the work of scientific teachers is directed towards exposing the errors of their predecessors, and they seem to forget that their successors will have equal delight in correcting their blunders. We may feel confident that the greater part of the wider generalizations and hypotheses put forward by science at the present day will ultimately be found to be erroneous or very imperfect.

And if this is true of science, it is still more true of philosophy. The history of philosophy is the history of wrecked systems. To their original inventor and his adherents they seemed for a time a satisfactory explanation of the reality of things, but very speedily criticism began its work and new systems, often contradictory, took their place. This does not mean that they have not contributed something to human insight into the things that transcend experience. Probably every sincere thinker has contributed something. But what is certain is that their system has passed away, and it makes it more than probable that the systems of the present day will have the same fate. And what are those systems that are presented to us? They are as varied as the colours of the rainbow. Just as each of the colours of the spectrum represents some element in the clear white light of the sun, but all are imperfect,

so we may with some exercise of faith believe that each observer and speculator has grasped some fragment of reality, and in the divine mind they are all harmonized into one great unity; but as authoritative descriptions of truth they have very little claim for our acceptance.

I would venture then to submit that the opinion which seems to be held by some people that the test of the truth of Christianity is whether it can be harmonized with the Science or Philosophy of the day must be discarded. It would be much truer to say that the test of modern thought is whether it harmonizes with the Christian Revelation, and that the real and permanent value of most human speculation is that it has succeeded in elucidating and illuminating some point in our conception of Christianity.

But this is not the whole truth. If our presentation of Christianity were in any sense perfect, it might be; but as a matter of fact the current exposition of the truths of our religion is always incomplete and faulty. There is inevitably mixed up with it much that is erroneous, and our vision of what it means is limited. There is therefore abundant scope for the working of criticism. Philosophical and scientific speculation has a valuable part to play, and its functions are twofold. The one is to sever from our exposition of the Christian Revelation all the errors that have arisen from the imperfect science and philosophy of the past, and the second to bring out more fully the meaning and value of the truth that has been given us.

Let us now turn to the various problems that are

discussed in this work. It is, as we have said, the business of the critic to separate Christian teaching from the imperfect science and philosophy of the past. Undoubtedly the relation of science and criticism to the Bible has for the last century presented a series of problems which have created widespread uncertainty. These are discussed for us by Professor Peake, of Victoria College, Manchester, the leading theologian of the Primitive Methodists, in one of the most valuable of the contributions to this volume. For Professor Peake does not defend the Bible: he understands it. He accepts it as the record of a continuous revelation. "To know and prize the Bible in bits is much less important than to know and prize it as a whole."[1] "The Bible is the record of a long historical process, and it is on this outstanding fact that we must concentrate our attention in any attempt to discover the right conception of revelation and the true significance of Scripture."[2] For the Bible teaches us religion, not through formulæ or propositions, but through life and experience; in its most complete presentation through the character, the action, the teaching, the life and death of Christ; in a less complete form in the whole history of Israel, national and personal. And this incidentally explains and justifies what are held to be the moral limitations of the Old Testament. "Had these defective elements been omitted, the Bible would have been greatly impoverished, and we would not have gained that apprehension of a progressive revelation which it is the function of the Old Testament to convey to us."[3] The imperfections of

[1] p. 181. [2] p. 168. [3] p. 171.

the Old Testament are accordingly no argument against the divine character of the religion. The Old Testament must be judged by its interpretation in the New Testament. Its meaning is given us by the fact that it leads up to Christ.

If we have once attained this conception of the Bible as a progressive revelation recorded by human and therefore imperfect hands, then most of the old difficulties will cease. We shall not expect it to teach us science or political economy. We shall expect the writers to have recorded their experience in accordance with the literary custom of their time. We shall be content to observe the stages by which the knowledge of God and His righteousness is taught. The imperfections of the Bible are its guarantee. If it taught us the science of the nineteenth century, if the Old Testament taught us the morality of Christ, if it exhibited the critical principles of Wellhausen or of Driver, we should know that it was not real. The Bible is always real, and therefore it teaches us in a way that no manual of dogmatic theology or system of ethics can ever do.

Now a study of the difficulties which have arisen from the too close association of religious truth with the imperfect science of the Bible ought to be a warning to us in relation to the science of the present day. Undoubtedly that science is imperfect. It will have to give way to wider and more complete generalizations in the future. Probably much of it is actually erroneous. We must hesitate, therefore, when we approach the relation of religion and science, lest we find ourselves creating for the future the same difficulties which have existed in the past. The

doctrine of special creation was the definite scientific teaching of the Pre-Darwinian age. It was maintained then almost as dogmatically by scientific professors, as Darwinism was in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately also it was looked upon as in a particular way a Christian theory. Now we recognize that it was not Christianity to which Darwinism was opposed but an imperfect scientific theory which had been confused with Christianity. Do not let us make the mistake of thinking that it is necessary to fit Christianity to the particular theory of the Origin of Species which happens to prevail at the moment

But there is another and more fundamental question that we have to deal with. I think that very often people do not understand the exact point where their difficulties lie and what it is that has caused even in the popular mind a vague feeling of doubt. I remember a scientific man once saying to me, "I do not think that there is any real conflict between science and religion, but all the same, science makes it very difficult to accept Christianity." Now the reason of that is that scientific research tends to absorb our minds with the mechanistic aspect of things. It studies the Universe as a machine, and our attention is so much occupied with the machine idea, that we find it difficult to find a place for anything else. Undoubtedly from one aspect the Universe is a machine, and the more science progresses the greater becomes the area of phenomena that it can explain on mechanistic lines. Obviously it seems the time will come when everything will be so explained, and then where should we find room for

anything else? God, the human soul, free will—all seem to have vanished.

It is this problem amongst others that the Archbishop of Armagh discusses in his able article on "The Doctrine of God." He presents to us the problem as follows: "The effect of all this is to make the world appear as a vast mechanical system in which every event follows inevitably and in which there is no real place for the spiritual. The latter seems but a fitful phosphorescence playing for a little while over the surface of an iron necessity." [1] Against this he points out first of all that mechanical explanations are themselves mental constructions, but suggests a simpler solution. Mechanism represents the way in which man attains his purpose. It is curious that in nature it should be thought that natural law denies man's freedom. A wider view shows us that it is just through the uniformities of nature that man attains his power over nature. If the processes of nature were not governed by law, man would be powerless. The more we know nature as law, the greater our power. "The laws of nature are, in fact, the very charter of human liberty." [2] "Every machine constructed gives to man some new power over the forces of nature. And every mechanical process discovered in nature adds something to that store of knowledge by which man is able to use material things for his own purposes." [3]

And then he asks, "Is it not absurd to suppose that this quality in things, by which man finds them measurable and obedient to his will, renders them altogether alien and intractable in relation to God?" [4]

[1] p. 80. [2] p. 81. [3] p. 82. [4] p. 82.

The more perfectly constructed a motor-car that I possess, the more perfectly it works as a machine, the more fitted it is to express my will. So it is just because the world is as it seems to us a world of law, or, if you prefer it, an admirably constructed machine, that therefore it can represent the Will of God. God is law, and it is in and through law that He expresses His will.

Another problem which perplexes many at the present day is the relation of Evolution to Theism. On this we have two interesting discussions, one by the Archbishop of Armagh, the other by Canon Storr in his paper on "Eternal Life," and both feel that the difficulty has really passed away. The older idea was that according to the evolutionary theory the whole process of development was purely mechanical, and, if I may say so, accidental. Without purpose and without plan, just by the struggle between those individuals which somehow differed from one another, living things in the course of myriads of years have come to be what they now are. Even on that hypothesis the curious fact required to be explained how a world came into being which was capable by a process of accidental variation to become what it has, or why things should have this curious and accidental capacity for variation which enabled them to become what they are. But modern science is tending more and more to feel that the original Darwinian hypothesis is inadequate. Evolution itself more and more gives signs of a purpose. The course of evolution suggests to us a planned course. It is directed to an end. It reveals a broad line of purpose. In early stages it anticipates its later developments.

"Evolution is continuous creation." "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." "Though many questions may be raised, it would seem more reasonable to regard this wonderful series as marking out the fulfilment of a universal purpose than as the result of accidental collocations in one corner of the Universe, the effort of blind mechanical forces working out their necessary end." [1] And there is still always the question, even if we were to accept the hypothesis of "blind mechanical forces," how is it that they are such as to have a necessary end?

The central belief of Christianity is the revelation of God in Christ—as Dr. Matthews puts it, "That Christ is the completely adequate revelation of the nature of God." What is the tendency of modern thought in relation to this belief? Can we agree with Dr. Matthews that "the advance of thought is making the apprehension of God in Christ easier not harder"?

I do not think that the alleged critical difficulties will ever have a wide influence. To most people they come at second hand and *prima facie* are a mutilation of the evidence. Our authority for the divine nature of Christ in the New Testament and the testimony there given are to most people so clear and attractive that the Christian Church, that is the sum of Christian experience, has never had any serious doubt. The scholars who claim to get behind the Gospels and teach us of another Christ are so arbitrary in their methods, exhibit such discrepancies in their theories, and are often so fantastic in their teaching, that they will never command wide assent. The Bible teaches

[1] pp. 87, 88.

us what the Church has always taught about Christ. It may be for certain reasons hard to accept, but it is what the Bible teaches. This is admirably put before us by Dr. Matthews in his contribution on "The Doctrine of Christ," and we may pass on to ask where the difficulty presents itself and is likely to present itself in the future. What are "the more fundamental problems which arise from our changed conception of the Universe"?

I think that we may put it in this way: Science and philosophy construct theories of the Universe without regard to the doctrine of the Incarnation, and then a difficulty is found in fitting it into its place in the system they have constructed. After all they are only theories, and if the theory will not account for all the facts, there must be something wrong with it. The fundamental question is whether the doctrine of the Incarnation is not truer than any of them? At any rate they change somewhat rapidly and there are many various ones put forward for our acceptance at the present time. The Dean of St. Paul's would have us be Platonists, Mr. Herbert Spencer tried to devise a theory of a mechanical evolution, Professor Lloyd Morgan talks of "emergent evolution," Professor Alexander speaks of a "nisus" in the Universe to produce new and higher types of being, by a process which is unending. Or what shall we say of Kant, and Hegel, and Schleiermacher, and Troeltsch? or of Rothe and Weisse? [1] No doubt they all help us by sincere thinking to see some aspect of truth, and to those to whom they appeal provide a provisional theory of things; but when we ask our-

[1] pp. 48–70.

selves soberly: Can we make agreement with this or that system our standard of truth?—our answer must obviously be that we cannot. They are all clearly imperfect; they show grave discrepancies one with another; if our religious experience and authority teach us of things inconsistent with these theories there is no reason why the theories should be right.

But we may rightly use human speculation to enable us to understand and to bring out more fully the meaning of the Christian Revelation. We should aim at building up a theory of the Universe which will be true alike to Christian experience, to the hypotheses of science and to any light that philosophy can give us, and a reader who carefully studies the place of the Incarnation in the Evolution theory of the world as expounded by Dr. Matthews, will feel that there is no inconsistency between his religious faith and the best that science can give us at the present time. "In the person of Jesus the creative life which we may discern working through all the course of Evolution finds its complete expression." [1]

Dr. Matthews finds in the conception of The Word, as used on its religious side in St. John's Gospel, on its cosmological side in Greek philosophy, a means of reconciliation of the ideas of Incarnation and Evolution.

It is not possible within the short limits of this Preface to touch on all the problems which present themselves to sincere thinkers at the present day and are discussed in this volume. What justification have we for looking upon Christianity as the final and universal religion? What is our duty in the Evan-

[1] p. 123.

gelization of the world? What is the validity of the argument from Christian experience? The problem of sin and evil and suffering—how far are they consistent with the belief in a good God? In what sense can we believe in any doctrine of Original Sin? How far is consciousness of sin real? For at the present day there is a curious inconsistency of thought. One of the greatest difficulties to religious belief at the present time to some persons is this fact of the existence of sin, and evil, and suffering in the world; yet when it comes to any consciousness of their own individual sin many people appear to deny its existence. Yet if there is sin at all it is something each individual is guilty of. So we want to know further, What reality can we give at the present day to such phrases as forgiveness of sin, atonement, propitiation? What is the meaning of the sacrifice of the death of Christ? And then again, there is the great and final question: What are the grounds of the hope of eternal life? There are many questions such as these which people ask at the present day, about which much help can, I think, be obtained from this work.

In one direction I am disappointed. The conception of the Christian Church, the Brotherhood of Christians in Christ, the means by which the Gospel is mediated in the world, hardly receives adequate treatment. There are many serious problems which demand careful treatment, and after all, the characteristics of the Church of the future will largely depend upon its external embodiment. Certainly the emphasis given to the ministry of women will seem to most people disproportionate and to many offensive. Why burden a book like this with precarious speculation?

I hope that the few words that I have been able to say by way of preface will be a fitting introduction to this book. It is valuable in itself. It is perhaps even more valuable as a sign of what is being accomplished. There is at the present day a body of able men, partly members of the Church of England, and of almost every party in that Church, partly Nonconformists, working on similar lines at the task of expressing the Christian Faith in a form which will appeal to the educated person of the present day, and to all those who are influenced, often more or less unconsciously, by what appears to be the trend of modern thought. They are the product, I believe, of the harmonious work of Church and Nonconformity in the Theological Faculties of our Universities. They have had largely the same intellectual training; they are in the habit of teaching in accordance with a common course of study; they approach problems in the same manner. On all subjects, even I believe to a large extent on questions connected with the Church, the Ministry and the Sacraments, they are attaining a common mind. Gradually I think it will be realized that in the exposition of the Gospel, there is a common body of wise and sober teaching, the existence of which will in the future do much to make easier a common religious instruction and is, we may hope, preparing the way for the united work of all the religious societies of the country in the great work of the evangelization of the world.

I

CHRISTIANITY IN RELATION TO OTHER RELIGIONS

By Sydney Cave, D.D.,
President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge

IT is a sign of the times that a book concerned with "The Future of Christianity" has at once to meet the challenge "Why the Future of Christianity and not the Future of Religion?"

That religion has a future most would agree. Few to-day ascribe the existence of religion to the sophistications of "priestcraft," and there is less confidence than there was that the advance of science will make religion seem an unnecessary survival. The study of religion has revealed its universality, and brought to light its ancient and sacred treasures. We realize with new vividness the intimate association of the historic religions with the civilization and the culture of their adherents. We know that man is inherently religious, and it is not difficult to believe in the permanency of religion. But what right have we in the modern world, which includes not only Europe and America, but the venerable civilizations of the East, to speak, as this book will do, as if the future of religion could be identified with the future of Christianity? Why should we claim for Christianity

more than we are willing to concede to the other great religions, and, even if it seem probable that the growing unity of the world will lead to unity also in religion, why should we suppose that that one religion will be Christianity, and not a synthesis of the historic religions in which Christianity will be, at best, but one contributory source ?

Such questions are so difficult to answer, that many theologians would prefer that the discussion of the Relation of Christianity to other Religions should be postponed until the time, if such time there be, when there is greater unanimity as to the nature both of Christianity and of the other religions. But such a postponement is impossible. To an extent unprecedented since the first Christian centuries, Christianity is in intimate contact with non-Christian religions, and the problem of its relation to them will not wait on our convenience. Throughout the Eastern world, this problem is by now the most urgent problem of religion, and answers to it are being given, which, if we accept them, involve not only the relinquishment of the Church's missionary work among all but " non-cultural " peoples, but a radical reduction in our estimate of Christianity, in which its claim, not only to ultimate finality, but to immediate adequacy, would have to be abandoned.

The problem of the Relation of Christianity to other Religions can no longer be envisaged as the relation of Christianity to " heathenism," or of " truth " to " falsehood." The great religions of the East, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islām, have in recent years been notably transformed, and it is between Christianity and these purified religions that the issue lies.

I

As is natural, it is in India that this modern problem is most clearly realized, for, in India, Christianity and Hinduism have been for more than a century in the closest contact.

That contact has brought about a striking enrichment and purification of Hinduism, and a revaluation of its vital forces. It is clear that the Hinduism which confronted the first Protestant missionaries in India was a Hinduism which had lost for the time its nobler aspirations. Learning had almost ceased, and cruel practices like *satī* and infanticide went unchecked. Christianity and Hinduism seemed to be in complete opposition, and it is not surprising that the early missionaries spoke with horror of the obscene idolatry they saw around them.[1] The first impact of Christianity not only won for the Church some converts of the highest type, but also led to the demand for radical reform, and the rise of the Brāhma Samāj movement, with its ruthless rejection of

[1] Cp. the prayer uttered by Schwartz at the dedication of his Church in Trichinopoly in 1766—a prayer now inscribed on a marble tablet there—" When strangers who do not know Thy name hear of all Thy glorious doctrines and methods of worshipping Thee preached in this house, incline, oh mercifully incline, their hearts to renounce their *abominable idolatry*." " Abominable idolatry "—we would not think of using such a phrase to-day, but anyone who has seen the foul carving on the neighbouring Vaishnavite temple at Srirangam, or the phallic worship at the Saivite temple at Tanjore, the other scene of Schwartz's labours, will understand the adjective Schwartz used, especially when it is remembered that these temples have been famed and prized for the number of their *devadāsīs*, the prostitute servants of the gods.

idolatry, its denunciation of the cruelties of caste, and its attempt to assimilate Hinduism to Christian ideals. But this mood of revolt passed. The rediscovery of the sacred Indian Scriptures, and their enthusiastic praise by Western scholars, brought new confidence and hope. Why should the East despise what the West so greatly prized, and what reason had India to seek for guidance from the West?

Sometimes, as in the Ārya-Samāj movement, the Hinduism thus defended is a Hinduism fundamentally transformed. Yet, for all its rejection of idolatry, and its endeavour to find in the *Vedas* a pure monotheism, no movement in Hinduism has been more bitterly opposed to Christianity, or has more contemptuously asserted its inferiority to Hinduism. And unreformed Hinduism has had its enthusiastic advocates. We think of that strange saint, Rāmakrishna Paramahamsa. Eagerly he sought to reach unity with God. For him it mattered not how God was conceived, if only He were passionately loved. At one time, dressing himself as a woman, he sought as Rādhā, Krishna's paramour, to show to Krishna Rādhā's hot and luxurious love. At another time, he sought to see Jesus in a vision, and for three days was absorbed in thought of Him. So he came to the conclusion that all religions were true, but "for the Hindus the ancient path, the path of the Aryan *Rishis* is the best." His own devotion was enkindled most by an image of the Goddess Kālī. Rāmakrishna was an Indian of the Indians, owing little to Western influences. His views were given an English form by his disciple and worshipper, Vivekānanda, a typical product of Western education, who claimed that

Hinduism was best, not for India only, but for the world. Alone of the great religions, Hinduism "escapes shipwreck" on what he called "the rock of historicality." Greeted with acclamation in India on his return from the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893, as the successful protagonist of Hinduism, he won for himself a conspicuous place in India's life, and his writings are still the favourite quarry of many Indian students. Everything Indian is extolled. Idolatry is justified, and its condemnation assigned to Western arrogance and blindness. The Vedānta, the Philosophy of the *Upanishads*, is "the first as well as the final thought which on the spiritual plane has been vouchsafed to man." Yet it is a Vedānta radically altered through Western influences, a Practical Vedānta, not of contemplation, but of active service to the Motherland.

More significant than any sectional movement is the religious nationalism of recent years. Patriotism demands the defence of everything Hindu, but it is a defence which is itself a transformation. Thus if the Krishna of the *Purānas* is retained, he is so interpreted that it is claimed that what seems to be the lewdness of their stories is due only to the lack of spiritual insight which marks the West. Others, ignoring the Krishna of the *Purānas*, turn to the noble Krishna of the *Bhagavadgītā*, and, whereas the *Bhagavadgītā* was almost unknown in India[1] a century

[1] Thus, in the best witnesses to the Hinduism of that period, the writings of Rām Mohan Rai, the founder of the Brāhma Samāj for North India, and *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, by Abbé Dubois, for South India, I can find no reference to the *Bhagavadgītā*; the Krishna of which they speak is the lewd Krishna of the *Purānas*.

or two ago, it has to-day an influence it would be difficult to over-emphasize. Hindus speak of the *Gītā* much as devout and simple Christians speak of St. John's Gospel, and men of unquestionable sincerity have told me that, at each fresh reading, fresh light comes, and in it they find the nurture of their inner life. To many an educated man to-day, its Krishna, interpreted often in the light of the Christian Gospels, seems not unworthy to be placed beside Jesus Christ Himself. Nor have the abundant treasures of devotion in the vernacular literature been forgotten. The beautiful and poignant hymns of the Marāthā Saints and the rich record of divine grace in the Saiva Siddhānta are now highly prized, and a new religious synthesis is being created in which veneration of Christ has often an important place.

Western education has not fulfilled Lord Macaulay's expectation, whilst Christianity seems, at first sight, to have brought to Hinduism new life. Since the war, many Hindus have felt a deep revulsion against everything European, and yet at no time has the influence of the Christian Gospels been stronger. Thus to Mr. Gandhi, European civilization is a "Satanic civilization," yet no Hindu has spoken in more moving terms of his indebtedness to Christ, and, little as we may like the illustration, it is significant of much that Hindus should speak of his strange trial before the English judge as a re-enactment of the trial of Jesus, and should know no higher way of expressing their admiration of his character than to say that he was Christ-like.

But admiration for Jesus is not acceptance of Christianity, and does not necessarily make the

relation of Christianity to Hinduism any more clear. We have no right to use Mr. Gandhi's acknowledgment of his debt to Jesus as a proof that he is, or desires to be, a Christian. To become a Christian would seem to him treachery to India, and in his admiration for Jesus and his rejection of Christianity Mr. Gandhi speaks for many a lesser man. "Hinduism," he tells us, "completely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being, and I find a solace in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Upanishads* that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount." The Hinduism which Mr. Gandhi finds thus satisfying, is a Hinduism so permeated with the Christian spirit that Mr. Gandhi can see even in the outcaste a fellow-man. The forces of reaction and conservatism are far stronger in India than is realized by those who judge of Hinduism by the utterances of Western-educated Hindus, but this new Hinduism, for all its indebtedness to Christianity, is no more ready than the old to give to Christ a unique and final place.

The relation of Christianity to Buddhism in the modern world is not dissimilar. Hard as it is to describe the vast complex of Hinduism, it is even harder to define the distinctiveness of Buddhism. Gautama bade his followers turn away from the thought of God and the soul, but, if he was a rationalist, he was an Indian rationalist, and, although he refused to speak of a supreme God, he yet retained the popular beliefs in gods and demons, in paradises and in hells. He seems to have been concerned, not to provide a religion for the many, but a "way," a "vehicle" of deliverance, by which those who were

ready to abandon the world, could discover the transiency of all existence and thus break the nexus of rebirth. Primitive Buddhism lacks the necessary apparatus of a religion, and Buddhism has suffered from its excessive inclusiveness. Nowhere, and probably at no time, is it to be found in isolation. It has brought to some an

> "exceeding store
> Of joy and an impassioned quietude," [1]

but only when combined with elements from other religions has it succeeded in meeting the needs of ordinary men.

Thus in Ceylon and Burma, where the Buddhism is of the more primitive Hīnayāna type, Buddhism has coalesced with devil worship. Here, too, Western scholarship and Christian teaching have had their effect, and there are movements of reform which seek to revivify Buddhism by bringing into prominence its purest teachings. Christian methods of propaganda are imitated, and Gautama is extolled in terms which owe much to Christian piety.

Buddhism has its chief importance in the modern world, not in this Hīnayāna form, but in the Mahāyāna, "the Great Vehicle," in which the more primitive Buddhism was assimilated to the Hindu worship of the Gods, for it is Mahāyāna Buddhism which predominates in China and Japan.

The days have long since gone when it was possible to include in Buddhism the vast population of China. Such an estimate was based on an entire misconcep-

[1] Cp. Mrs. Rhys Davids' beautiful translation of *The Psalms of the Early Buddhists.*

tion. Outside the Buddhist monasteries, Buddhism is not so much a separate religion as a pervasive influence in the general complex of Chinese religion. It has become closely associated with ancestor-worship, and its monks and monasteries have been enlisted in that grim fight against the spectres for which every element of Chinese religion has been mobilized. Mahāyāna Buddhism is rich in gods and goddesses, and they have formed a picturesque addition to the somewhat prosaic pantheon of China.

So far as we can judge, modern influences have not as yet produced in China a renaissance of a purified religion comparable to that in India, and Christianity is confronted, less with revivified religions, than with a religious indifference which oscillates between secularism and superstition. Yet here, too, the exclusiveness of Christianity forms part of its offence. Buddhism, save in a few monasteries, exists, not in isolation, but in conjunction with Confucian ethics and Taoist exorcism. Why should not Christianity be content with a like place, and make to China its contribution of Christian character without attempting to be the sole religion?

That is a question which is put with still greater emphasis and urgency in Japan. Buddhism has adapted itself to the religious patriotism of Shintō, and to that filial piety which Confucianism enjoins. Why should not Christianity do the same, why should it claim an exclusive place? Buddhism in Japan is necessarily familiar with the idea that many paths may lead to the same goal, for it is divided into sects which differ fundamentally in their teaching. It is significant that the sect which has to-day the greatest

vitality—the True Pure Land Sect—has departed radically from early Buddhism. It rejects the conception of merit, opens the way of deliverance to married men engaged in life's ordinary tasks, and relies, not on obedience to the teaching of Gautama, but on faith in Amida, the mythic Lord of the Western Paradise, whose grace is such that, if men trust in him, they will go at once at death to share his Paradise of bliss. Much as this Amidaism resembles Christianity, it seems improbable that it owes to Christianity its origin,[1] but to-day no sect shows such skill in adapting Christian methods, and none so well succeeds in popular appeal.

The splendour of Christ's character is widely recognized, and many of those most sensitive to modern influences desire an eclectic religion which would bring together in a rich mosaic ideas derived from Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity. They are ready to recognize in Christ one of *The World's Three Saints*,[2] but they will not give Him an exclusive homage. With Him they put Confucius and Sākyamuni in equal honour.

The relation of Christianity to Islām obviously differs from its relation to Hinduism and Buddhism.

[1] Amidaism was one of the elements of the teaching of the Tendai sect which was introduced into Japan from China in the ninth century A.D. It has been supposed that its rise in China was due to the influence there of Nestorian Christianity. But the explanation seems unnecessary, as Amidaism is a development of the "Western Paradise" school of the Mahāyāna which flourished in India about the beginning of the second century, and which can be sufficiently explained from its Hindu and Buddhist antecedents.

[2] The title of an influential Japanese book.

It is possible to claim—to adopt the title of Dr. Farquhar's well-known book—that Christianity is *The Crown of Hinduism*, and to trace in both Hinduism and Buddhism aspirations which, as we believe, Christianity alone can adequately meet. But Islām was born long after Christianity. At first sight, it would appear that Muhammad knew of Christ, and deliberately rejected Him. But such a statement is only partly true. The Christianity Muhammad knew was the corrupt Christianity of Arabia, supplemented by his casual observation of the Christianity of Syria. Not unnaturally he believed that Christians worshipped three gods, God the Father, God the Son, and the Virgin Mary. Of Jesus he spoke always with honour. He was born of a virgin. Not only did He heal the sick and raise the dead, but to Him are assigned some of the crude marvels of later Christian legend. Although Muhammad believed that Jesus would Himself have condemned the worship of Him as a God, of Him the *Qurān* narrates no sin nor disobedience. Yet between Christianity and Islām there has long been bitter strife.

Islām has long been judged by Christendom as men judge an enemy they scorn because they fear. To us to-day in the West, the Crusades are generally remembered as romantic incidents of a half-forgotten age. To Muslims they are the proof of Christian hatred. Raymond Lull's missionary service shines out in the medieval church with almost solitary splendour. In vain did he protest against "the attempt to acquire the Holy Land by force of arms," "whereas its conquest ought not to be attempted,

save in the way in which Christ and the Apostles acquired it, by love and prayers, by the pouring out of tears and blood." Muhammad was the great false prophet, and his followers the enemies of Christ, to be conquered, not converted. Dante spoke for his age when he placed Muhammad in one of the lowest chasms of the Inferno, and described in ruthless detail the loathsome torments there endured by this "sower of discord and of schism." [1] This estimate of Muhammad long remained, and at the beginning of the modern missionary enterprise, Muhammad was still held by many to be the great impostor.[2]

These ancient memories make difficult any recognition by Muslims of the indebtedness of Islām to Christianity. Yet that indebtedness is great. The *Qurān* is unintelligible save by reference to Judaism and Christianity, and in the tolerant days of the Umayyid rulers, Muslim theologians learnt to appropriate still more of Christian beliefs. Thus in the *Qurān*, Muhammad is not a worker of miracles, but to him are assigned in the Traditions many of the miracles of Jesus. Even the character of the stern Arab chieftain was in part assimilated to that of Jesus, and his intercession for the faithful at the Last Day is increasingly emphasized.

Now that Islām is once more in intimate association with Christianity, there has been a further revision

[1] *Inferno*, Canto XXVIII, 22–40.

[2] Cf. Charles Wesley's hymn:

"That Arab thief as Satan bold
Who quite destroyed Thy Asian fold.
Stretch out Thine arm, Thou Triune God,
The Unitarian fiend expel.
And chase his doctrine back to Hell."

of its teaching, and of its estimate of its founder. Here again it is in India that Christianity and a non-Christian religion have most nearly met. It would be instructive, if our space allowed, to compare the Muhammad of one of the early Arabic biographers, Ibn Ishāq,[1] with the Muhammad of a modern Indian Muslim like Syed Ameer Alī. By the latter, everything in Muhammad's life which is repugnant to modern men is explained away, and Muhammad is depicted, not only as God's last prophet, but as the noblest saint the world has known. His life was "consecrated, first and last to the service of God and of humanity. Is there another to be compared to his, with all its trials and temptations? Is there another which has stood the fire of the world, and come out unscathed?" [2]

Not in India only, but throughout the Muslim world, there have been in recent years amazing changes in Islām. Women are gaining a freedom incompatible with earlier Muslim views. Even the Caliphate has been for the time, at any rate, abolished. There is movement and new life, but there are as yet few signs that these will lead to the Christian estimate of Christ.

Brief as this sketch has inevitably been, it has at least shown the urgency of the problem with which

[1] It is available in a German translation by G. Weil. *Das Leben Mohammeds nach Mohammed Ibn Ishāk bearbeitet von Abd-el-Mālik Ibn Hishām.*

[2] *The Spirit of Islām*, p. 110. It is interesting to compare the matter-of-fact way in which Ibn Ishāq speaks of Muhammad's wives and concubines (*op cit.*, II, p. 341), with Ameer Alī's attempt to show that in this, too, Muhammad was guided only by altruism and "was undergoing a sacrifice of no light a character" (*op. cit.*, p. 190).

this chapter deals. The question of the relation of Christianity to other religions is not a subtlety of theologians. It has become a life-issue for Christianity. Everywhere we can trace the permeating influence of Christian ideas, even though, as in Islām, there is little recognition of their source. Should we be content with this, or must we claim for Christianity a unique and final place, and, if so, in what sense?

II

It cannot be said that this problem has received adequate attention in modern theology. As we have seen, it is in the last half-century that this problem has become acute through the revival and partial Christianization of non-Christian religions. In England, in that period, Christian scholars have in general been too absorbed in the study of Christian origins to be at leisure to attempt to relate Christianity to the needs of an awakened world. In Protestant Europe, the dominant theology has been that of Ritschl. Ritschl, we believe, rendered the Church an immeasurable service by saving it from the seductions of Hegelianism, and by re-asserting that the Christian certainty lies, not in the realm of speculation, but in the central fact of Jesus Christ who, by the perfect fulfilment of His vocation, established the Kingdom of God, and brought to men the sure knowledge of the Father's heart. But the rigid concentration of Ritschl on the historically given, led to an excessive limitation of outlook, and both Ritschl and Herrmann, his most influential disciple, resolutely refused to discuss any knowledge of God other than that which has come through Jesus Christ.

One extreme leads to another, and it has been from former Ritschlians, especially, that there has come the recent attempt to deal with Christianity, not in isolation, but in such intimate connection with the whole course and movement of religion that often its distinctive novelty has been obscured. So far this "Religio-historical" school has been more influential in scholarship than in theology, but it has produced one great systematic thinker, Troeltsch, whose writings form an almost inevitable starting-point for any modern discussion on the relation of Christianity to other religions.

Troeltsch's views received their most formal expression in an early book of his, *The Absolute Validity of Christianity and the History of Religions.*[1] The customary claim for the absolute validity of Christianity, Troeltsch regards as mere *naïveté*, impossible now that history has linked up the present and the past in an inseparable whole. Nowhere in history do we meet with Christianity in its pure essence. Everywhere Christianity is a purely historical phenomenon, limited and conditioned by its age and place. Although the historical is necessarily the relative, we are not to conclude that the history of religions presents us with such a mass of conflicting values that choice becomes impossible. Those who have had anything to say to the race are very few, and it is indeed surprising on how few ideas humanity has had to live. Thus the lower phases of religion, apparently so different, are really marked by a great monotony, and, in any case, are irrelevant to our quest; whilst the higher polytheisms are restricted in their influence

[1] 1st edit., 1902. 2nd edit., 1912.

to the countries of their origin. Historical religions of more than merely local value are not numerous. Every judgment of value is in a sense a personal confession, and so cannot claim complete objective worth, yet, as we compare Christianity with these religions, we find that an honest historical judgment does not preclude the view that Christianity is the highest of all religions. As we examine the great historical religions, we find that they fall into two clearly marked classes. Judaism and Islām are religions of law; Hinduism and Buddhism are religions of redemption. Each class has its distinctive strength and weakness. The legal religions proclaim a God whose will is known and must be obeyed, but they fail to bring to their followers redemption from the world. The redemptive religions merge the world and man into unity with God, but in doing so they empty God of all positive meaning. Christianity, by proclaiming a personal and living God who unites us to Himself, alone meets the needs expressed by both the legal and redemptive religions. It is thus not only the climax, but the converging point of the two great types of historical religions.[1]

Beyond this Troeltsch will not go. We can claim

[1] Troeltsch's argument seems to emphasize unduly the antithesis between the two types of religion. Judaism is still a religion of redemption as well as law, whilst in Islām there is the Sūfī movement in which unity with God is sought. Buddhism and Hinduism, in some of its phases, have strong ethical interests. Instead of speaking of two classes of religion, we should rather speak of two tendencies found in imperfect unity in all these religions; the one concerned primarily with conduct, the other with redemption from the world.

that Christianity can so far meet the deepest needs of men, but as we do not know what new needs will emerge, we may not speak of its "unsurpassability." Yet Troeltsch claimed that what he had gained was enough for Christian faith. Nowhere else can we find God so well as in the life-world of all the prophets and of Christianity, and of this whole life-world Jesus is for us at once the source and symbol. Whatever future millenia may bring, we have enough in Christianity to save us to-day from the chaos and desolation which threaten the world on every side.

The book was written in the hope of regaining for his countrymen a reasoned confidence in the validity of Christianity. As Troeltsch says in his article on *Missions in the Modern World*: "Faith is no longer faith, if it has lost courage for its extension and no longer feels an inner impulse to share with others what it possesses." "Unlimited relativity is a degeneration of the idea of tolerance." "It is the modern disease and weakness from which faith suffers." [1]

Troeltsch's argument seems more suggestive than conclusive. To an extent greater than Troeltsch realized, all judgments of the worth of a religion are judgments of value, and the superiority of Christianity to other religions cannot be proved except by Christian values. Thus to us, as Christians, personal communion with the living God revealed in the historic Christ is the highest form of religion, but by what logic can that be proved to a Hindu who regards personality, whether in God or man, as a limitation, and holds that all historical events belong to the

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, II, p. 790.

sphere of the unreal? Even if the superiority of Christianity to other religions could be proved, such a proof would not express the Christian confidence.

What Troeltsch called the *naïveté* of Christian faith seems to belong to its essence. It is one thing to say "I can nowhere find God so well as in the life-world of the prophets and Christianity." It is another to say "I have truly found God in Christ." Troeltsch so little realized the difference between the two expressions that in one place he put them side by side as if they were identical. But the difference is fundamental. It is one thing to be a Christian because Christianity is for us, at the present, the most adequate form of religion. It is another to be a Christian because in Christ we believe the holy love of God has been perfectly revealed. Troeltsch's position, popular as it is with many, seems an impossible compromise. We are driven, either to affirm the finality of Christianity, or to abandon any attempt to claim for it, even in the present, universal validity.

Troeltsch himself came to realize this, but it was the latter alternative that he adopted. For us "the only religion we can endure is Christianity, for Christianity has grown up with us, and has become part of our being." But we can only claim "its validity for us. It is God's countenance as revealed to us; it is the way in which, being what we are, we receive, and react to, the revelation of God." But "other racial groups, living under entirely different cultural conditions, may experience their contact with the Divine Life in quite a different way." Such a position inevitably means the abandonment of the

belief that Christianity is all the world's concern. We have a missionary duty to "heathen races" which "are being morally aud spiritually disintegrated by the contact with European civilization" and may meet among them some success. But we have no right to suppose that there will be any "conversion or transformation" from the great cultural religions to Christianity. All that can be hoped for is "a measure of agreement and of mutual understanding." [1]

In this, his ultimate conclusion, Troeltsch doubtless speaks for many in the modern world. Such recognize the importance of Christianity for Europe and admit its value for primitive races who, through contact with Western civilization, are losing their own religion, and with it that interest in life without which they cannot survive, but who, at the same time, feel that Christianity has no right to claim final and universal validity. But generous as such views seem, they cannot be accepted without the complete abandonment of much that is classic in Christianity, and, indeed, essential to its authority and certainty.

III

Every science is conditioned by its categories, and the categories of history are relative, not absolute, and are concerned with degrees of probability. That the science of the history of religions cannot prove, either the finality of Christianity, or its superiority to other religions, we would, at once, concede, for such

[1] From *Christianity and World Religions*, a lecture written for delivery at Oxford just before Troeltsch's death, and published in *Christian Thought*, 1923. Truth thus becomes, as Troeltsch puts it, "polymorphous."

claims are based ultimately on personal convictions, on judgments of value, which transcend the categories of history. If we believe that Christianity has final and unique significance, it is not because of a comparison of Christianity with other religions. It is because we believe that in Christ we know God as He is. The issue thus resolves itself into an estimate of the nature and the truth of the Christian message.

If we regard Jesus merely as the supreme teacher of our race whose teaching is best adapted to Western needs, then we need not claim for Christianity a special place, and can be content that valuable elements of His teaching are being used to-day to supplement the truths of other religions. But such has not been the Christian estimate of Jesus. In the first Christian centuries, beyond the confines of the Roman Empire, there were doubtless tribes sunk in "heathenism." If Troeltsch's view be right, St. Paul and the other Christian missionaries should have gone to them alone. They should not have preached the Gospel to men who had already a rich and ancient heritage of religion. They did not so judge. To them Jesus Christ was not one among many Lords. He was the sole Lord of men; the one adequate Redeemer. Hence He was each man's concern, and to serve Him was not a matter of private preference, but of utter obligation. It was in this distinctive claim of Christianity that there lay at once its power and its offence. When, later, Christianity was better known, there were many in the pagan world who were prepared to appropriate aspects of its teaching. It was the exclusiveness of Christianity which aroused their opposition, and then, as now, the gravest peril of the

Church came, not from heathenism, but from a paganism purified in part by Christianity. Apart from that exclusiveness, there would soon have been no need for Christian martyrdoms. Christianity would have been but one cult more. But, if that had been so, it is unlikely that we should know more of Christianity than we do of the mystery cults, and the Christianity which, as Troeltsch says, is "the only form of religion" we in the West "can endure," would probably have been absorbed into the vast and confused complex of contemporary religion.

The exclusiveness of Christianity is still its offence. Yet it would seem that the distinctive claim of Christianity cannot be abandoned without the abandonment of Christianity itself. Hinduism and Buddhism can enter into new syntheses just because in these religions God is thought of as ultimately unknown. It is not difficult for religions which conceive of God in a multiplicity of beings, some noble and some base, to add Christ to their pantheon. If we can think of God as Kālī, and as Krishna, and as Jesus of the Gospels, that means that it does not matter how we think of God, if only we seek union with Him.[1] Gautama in the early Pāli texts is not the revealer of God. He is the discoverer of a way of deliverance. To him, too, God was unknown. In the *Qurān*, Muhammad is not the embodiment of

[1] As a recent Hindu writer puts it: The Hindu "has worshipped his Deity as father, mother, brother, sister, sweetheart, lover, friend and what not. His polytheism or henotheism is based on his agnosticism. . . . And the invention of deities has not yet ceased." Mr. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, *The Folk-Element in Hindu Culture*, p. 260.

God's character. He is one who received from God commands, commands which are inconsistent, and which, in the later *Sūrahs*, especially, reveal the incongruities of Muhammad's strangely blended personality. But Christianity presupposes that God is known in Jesus Christ. All that Jesus can do for men is inseparably connected with what He is. He knew God with a knowledge unique and certain. With Him vocation and personality were identified. In His life and death the holy love of God was shown. Of the content of the Christian message it does not fall to the present writer to speak. That will be described in other chapters of this book. God revealed in the crucified and risen Lord, Christ indistinguishable in Christian experience from God Himself, the Holy Spirit known and experienced in the work of men's salvation—these are truths which were the common property of the early Church, and are still shared by that common Christian faith which is at once Evangelical and Catholic. But if we accept this Christian gospel, then Christianity is for us inevitably a universal religion. It is not the concern of the West alone. It is the concern of every people and every race, and we are compelled by the inherent logic of our faith to look forward to the time when Christianity shall become the religion of the world.

Such a belief should lead, not to arrogance, but to humility. Claims to superiority are always offensive, and if Christianity were to us merely the religion of the West, then our claim that Christianity is superior to other religions might well be only an expression of Western pride. But in those who believe that Christianity is the Gospel for the world such pride is

simply silly. The Christian missionary, who knows his business, goes, not as the herald of a dominant civilization, but as the ambassador of a Gospel which the civilization of his country has in part distorted, and which he himself has only imperfectly obeyed and understood. He has to speak as one who has come to learn, as well as teach, as one who knows that the riches of his message will only be fully seen when it has become the faith of the whole race. He dare not speak as if Christendom were Christian, or as if any Church, or any nation, had a monopoly of Christian truth. So, instead of seeking to condemn the worst in the religion of those to whom he goes, he will look eagerly for the best, knowing that in Christ is the answer to all true aspiration. With God there is no respect of persons, and many a non-Christian has made a more perfect response to an imperfect revelation than we have done to a revelation which we believe is adequate and certain. As we study the writings of pagan saints, we may well learn to be ashamed of the coldness of our own devotion, and, as we proclaim Christ as the final Saviour of the world, do so as those who know how unworthy they are of so high a task.

> "This is my King! I preach and I deny Him.
> Christ! Whom I crucify anew to-day."

Such a message is not the imposition of an alien civilization. It is the humble proclamation of a Gospel which belongs, not to us alone, but to the world. Already, as we have seen, throughout the East, the significance of Jesus is being partly realized. Increasingly He is becoming the conscience of the

race, the norm of human character. Base conceptions of God are shrivelling up before the splendour of His holy love, and ancient religions are being purified through Him. This does not make the winning of converts any easier, since, for the time, the distinction between Christianity and non-Christian religions is thereby blurred. But the Church's task is not one of subjugation, and should not be conceived in terms of warfare. It is an immense gain that in India, for instance, many should think of God, not as the lascivious Krishna of the *Purānas*, but as the noble Krishna of the *Gītā*, interpreted in the light of the Christian Gospels. But ultimately the question will have to be faced, who is this mythic Krishna, and what is known of him ? and so, at last, if there is to be any confidence in a God of holy love, men will be driven from admiration for Jesus to faith in Him.

We are here in the domain, not of science, but of faith. And faith finds its confirmation, not in dialectic, but in service. In a sense other than Troeltsch meant, the finality of Christianity lies beyond history. In any of its empirical forms, Christianity is a historical phenomenon, and, as such, local and temporary. But the limitations of a merely national Christianity can be in part transcended, as Christianity is related to the aspirations of non-Christian religions. Many a missionary finds that, as he tries to meet new needs, new resources are discovered. Thus a man who has to face, as some of us have had to do in India, an audience of outcastes on the Sunday, and a great class of Hindu students all the week, gains fresh confirmation for his faith, as he finds that he can have a message adequate for

each. His own interpretation of the Gospel is too limited, too Western, but, as with others' needs in mind, he re-explores the Gospel, he finds in it ideas and forces which before he had ignored. Its deliverance from the tyranny of fear means more when we have to deal with those who once lived in fear of devils. Such phrases as "eternal life" and "in Christ Jesus" gain new significance when we are seeking to present Christ to those whose quest has been for the unseen and the eternal.[1]

If we believe that in Christ there is true revelation of God, true communion, true redemption, we are committed to the belief that Christianity is of final and universal worth. It is a claim which, if rightly realized, will lead not to harsh judgments of other religions, but to penitence for the Church's partial failure. The relation of Christianity to other religions is being tested in the laboratory of life. Much of the resentment at the claim of Christianity is due to our failure to show its reality in our obedience. It is a claim which commits those that make it to a tremendous enterprise. We dare not confess Christ as the world's sole Lord except as we seek to make Him known to all. It means the extinction of racial pride and colour prejudice. It means that we ourselves must really trust the God whom we have seen in Him, and live our lives as those who know that the holy love which He revealed is eternal and divine, and so must be the one standard of all human judgment.

[1] The writer would venture to refer to his book *Redemption, Hindu and Christian* (Oxford University Press, 1919), where the attempt is made to explore this significance.

II

THE VALIDITY OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

By H. Wheeler Robinson, D.D.,
Principal of Regent's Park College, London

I

THE most characteristic feature of modern theology is its appeal to experience. This may be seen in the eager collection and comparison of data from the widest ranges of the religious consciousness, and the consequent rise of a new science, the psychology of religion, which has created a whole library of good, bad, and indifferent books within the last quarter of a century. It may be seen, again, in the concern of philosophic theology with human personality and its values as of central interest and supreme importance. A further proof lies in the fact that the outstanding theologians of the last century, the men who mark the line of its most potent theological influence upon the present, are beyond question Schleiermacher and Ritschl, both characterized by this appeal. It is the common ground of men so remote in their conclusions as Dean Inge and Baron von Hügel; the former can sum up his *Confessio Fidei* by the formula "true faith is belief in the reality of absolute values," [1] the latter

[1] *Outspoken Essays*, II, p. 35.

his discussion of " Religion and Reality " by saying of our ascription to the supreme Reality of " what we ourselves possess that is richest in content, that is best known to us, and that is most perfect within our own little yet real experience " that " we have done what we could." [1]

In making this appeal, theology is simply interpretative of the common religious consciousness of the present day, the fundamental consciousness (for the Christian) of an experienced fellowship with God through Christ. We are sometimes in danger of unduly magnifying the differences of doctrine amongst Christians. These differences are by no means unimportant. But they will be found to attach chiefly to the *mediation* of divine activity, as through the sacraments or the ministry. On both sides of this mediation, in the doctrine of the divine Person with whom we have fellowship, and the human response within that fellowship, there is much more of common ground that we sometimes admit. We might put to a number of representatives of different Christian communities the practical question, " What must I do to be saved ? " and there would be wide differences in the form and emphasis of the answers. Yet even in those which stressed

[1] *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion*, p. 50. Newman's well-known criticism of " Liberalism " (*Apologia*, Note A) may be accepted as a clear statement of the modern issue : " Liberalism, then, is the mistake of subjecting to human judgment those revealed doctrines which are in their nature beyond and independent of it, and of claiming to determine on intrinsic grounds the truth and value of propositions which rest for their reception simply on the external authority of the Divine Word."

the necessity for some sort of external authority, whether Church or Bible, the tendency would probably be to a pragmatic test of the validity of that authority.[1] "Trust what the Church or the Bible tells you—and see if the experience of your obedience does not confirm you in that obedience." This emphasis would be still more marked, if we went on to put the further question about religious certitude, "How can I know that I am saved?" It would not misrepresent the general trend of such answers to both questions to say that (apart from the claim for a particular discipline or mediating authority, as a tutor to bring us to Christ) they would probably make a triple appeal to Christian experience, viz., (1) the intrinsic worth and trustworthiness of the religious values, (2) their sufficient sanction in and through Christ, (3) the experience of divine activity through Christ (which involves a doctrine of the Holy Spirit). This is the victory that has so far overcome the world—our faith that God has really given Himself to us in Christ. We can give reasons for this confidence, but our "assents" are always deeper than our formal and logical reasons, and therefore the ultimate argument will always be some form of the appeal to an experience.

This, of course, has always been true. Wherever there has been vital religion, there has been the implicit or explicit appeal to experience. "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Beneath the changing formulation of doctrine, and beneath the slower changes of the Church's institutions, there

[1] These remarks are based on an actual experiment of this kind.

is something more permanent, to which we come nearest in the great devotional books. We cannot "date" a mystical experience of this kind: "Say, Fool of Love, if thy Beloved no longer cared for thee, what wouldst thou do?" "I should love Him still," he replied. "Else must I die; seeing that to cease to love is death and love is life." [1] Such an experience is not "immediate" in the strict sense of being unmediated—there is no absolutely unmediated experience—but *relatively* to the religion of creeds and institutions the mystical claim to immediacy may be allowed. One generation or school will find in such an experience the witness of the Spirit, and another faith in absolute values, and both are justified. In any case, it is something incomparable and unique, and it is the very thing we are apt to miss when we study a system from without.[2] The "modernist" who prides himself on having broken loose from the authority of Church or Bible may easily forget that within the nurture and protection of that authority there was known the warmth of a vital experience of God, which we have hardly learnt to sustain without it. The point is that "experience" is not something to be placed in bare antithesis to the external authority of Church or Bible. Whatever false claims may have been

[1] *The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, by Ramon Lull (Eng. tr. by E. Allison Peers), p. 35; cf. Rom. ix. 3, 1 John iv. 16; "where love is, God is"—even though He be silent. It is not, of course, suggested that Lull's experience typifies the average Christian consciousness.

[2] Cf. Lord Acton's *Letters*, I, p. 60: "the deepest historians . . . do not know how to think or to feel as men do who live in the grasp of the various systems."

urged or are urged still on their behalf, they mediated and still mediate a religious experience, and there is no such thing as an unmediated experience. However natural may be the growth of human personality into the Christian experience of fellowship with God, it will always depend on the shaping and stimulating influence of social tradition, of which every evangelistic appeal and every form of religious education is a special application. Those, therefore, who claim for Bible and Church a *de jure* authority can at least point to a *de facto* necessity as the basis of their doctrine.

In the formulation of this doctrine, however, we must not overlook the facts which the study of the origins of both the Bible and the Church is always bringing before us. Historical study of the Bible compels us to look beyond a literature to a history, and within that history to the religious consciousness of individual men. Every doctrine of Scriptural revelation turns at last on our interpretation of the prophetic consciousness of the Old Testament and the apostolic consciousness of the New—in other words, on facts of religious experience. It is not otherwise with the authority of the Church. The polity which expresses that authority can be traced as a slow development, in close relation with the geographical and social conditions of the early centuries. The doctrinal decisions of Church councils can be shown to have been influenced by ecclesiastical diplomacies and personal predilections, as well as by reaction on surrounding philosophies and religions. All this does not necessarily prevent us from recognizing a divine direction of the Church and an authoritative utterance through it, any more than

similar phenomena prevent us from acknowledging the inspiration of Scripture. But it does compel us to recognize also that the authority of the Church is ultimately a specialized form of the authority of experience.[1] In other words, the authority of both Bible and Church is derived from the interpretation of divine activity in human experience, and experience is the more inclusive category. It is, of course, only as we thus co-ordinate and include the whole of Christian experience through all the generations that we can reach objective standards, and escape from the waywardness of individualism. Whatever delegated and derived authority may be properly recognized, the ultimate authority for the modern mind that has learnt to criticize its own assumptions must be something *intrinsic*, something that philosophy will call " values " and theology the activity of

[1] By " authority of experience " I do not mean to suggest that the " experienced " is independent of some one " experiencing " and therefore interpreting it. (See the suggestive contrast of " ed " and " ing " in Lloyd Morgan's *Emergent Evolution*, p. 39, to which the Rev. D. Stewart calls my attention.) The ultimate authority in religion is God as known in our experience of His activity ; but this activity (within our consciousness) takes the form of a fellowship to which man contributes even though God contributes infinitely more. That which is thus experienced is the ultimate compelling fact, the basis of personal conviction, and the authority is of the nature of intrinsic worth or value. If it be objected that this is an argument in a circle, since the value is necessarily a value for *me*, the reply must be along the lines of § iv. It is, of course, implied that the individual experience is correlated with the collective experience of the race and criticized by it. This collective experience is partly articulated in the Bible and in the Church, which are therefore authoritative in their own degrees.

the Spirit of God. Where God is present, He is active, and where He is active, He needs no testimonial of character. There is no novelty in this appeal to the intrinsic authority of experience. It is, for example, found in Butler's cogent sentence, "Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be." [1] The novelty, such as it is, lies in the fearless confidence that a reconstruction of Christian thought on the basis of experience will give us back all that is necessary for religion and all that is true for theology in the older appeals to derived authorities.

II

It would be a mistake to suppose that this new emphasis on experience is simply an apologetic device, to which we have been driven by the criticism of the origins of Bible and Church. Necessity is the mother of invention, but invention may be the discovery of truth. Just as modern philosophy is driven back on a criticism of experience for its epistemology, its science of knowledge, so is modern theology. Philosophy discovers that the dualism which began with Descartes [2] creates insuperable difficulties, and that it is necessary to get back to a duality within the unity of experience as something "given." Theology discovers its foundation in an actual experience of fellowship with God, as not less something "given." It is significant that this is admitted even by Ritschl, the typical example and pioneer of alienation from metaphysical construc-

[1] Sermon VII, "Upon the Character of Balaam," last paragraph.

[2] Cf. Ward, *Psychological Principles*, p. 12 f.; von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses*, p. 51.

tion in theology, for he says, "in religion the thought of God is given." [1] This is not to be construed as a warrant for holding any particular dogma to be a direct revelation. In grace, as in nature, there are secondary causes, and most of us will admit that "our schemes of value, whether scientific or metaphysical, take symbolical shapes when we try to make them principles of action or even objects of contemplation." [2] But we are justified in saying that for Christian theology the "given" is that which we interpret as the real presence of God through the Spirit of Christ active in Christian experience, and that this "given" affords a valid knowledge of God within the limitations of human experience. The last clause must be emphasized. Just as any theory of the Incarnation which does justice to the historical data must employ some principle of "Kenosis" (in the broadest sense of the term), so there is a necessary "Kenosis" or "self-emptying" of the Holy Spirit involved in any and every indwelling of man.[3] We certainly cannot ignore the claim of Christian experience to be a new creation in which God is active in ways beyond those of His activity within human experience in general. But if that activity is to be within the realm of conscious life, it must take some such form as the New Testament doctrine of the Holy Spirit, a mingling of Spirit with spirit, a fellowship of God and man. That is conceivable only

[1] *Christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, III, p. 17 (Eng. tr., "Justification and Reconciliation," p. 17). I owe the reference to Principal R. S. Franks, who refers to it in his contribution to this volume.

[2] Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, II, p. 15.

[3] See "The Kenosis of the Spirit," *Expository Times*, Aug. 1924, pp. 488–93, by H. Wheeler Robinson.

by the grace of God in accepting the limitations of our personality as the sphere of His activity. In the Incarnation, that acceptance was not complicated by moral issues; but a personality which is not sinless involves a further and deeper act of grace. Only as we study the full significance of this primary fact of Christian experience can we see the full evidence for the continuity of God's ways and for the revelation of His character. The divine drama of history which the Bible sets forth in the making of a people, the inspiration of prophets, the discipline of exile, the tragedy of the Cross, is seen to be still in its fifth act, the coming of the Kingdom of God. Through them all His Spirit is active; in them all He "empties Himself" in differing degrees.

III

The chief contemporary criticism of religious experience is condensed in the question, "Is religion an illusion?" Many factors have contributed to the present formulation of the question, but most prominent amongst them has been the study of origins, and particularly in our own time, the study of the psychological origins of religious experience. It is sometimes difficult to be patient with the naïve assumption of so many writers that an account of the genesis of anything is *ipso facto* a philosophy of its ultimate origin or "source." [1] But it will prove

[1] More careful use of terms, here as elsewhere, would clear up many misconceptions. By "origin," we should denote the prior history of anything; by "genesis" its beginning, which is a mere phase or episode of that history; by "source" we may point to the timeless reality, in which our explanation must issue, if it is to be complete.

worth while to have passed through this period of unrest and uncertainty, if it compels us to make sure of our foundations. Many current criticisms of religion drawn from psychology will prove as ineffective as many criticisms of the Bible in the last generation drawn from science; they will prove to be not necessarily wrong in themselves but perverse in their application, and the re-statement of the nature of religious experience will be the sounder because it has had to show their perversity by a clearer presentation of itself.

Such a partial, but misapplied, truth may be seen in the claim that every religious conception has had a prior history, and bears upon it the stamp of the particular mind (and generation) of him who conceives it, so that it is only a "projection" of that mind. We may reply simply, but sufficiently, "The real question at issue is not, Is the idea of God a projection, but is it *only* a projection? If the phrase may be allowed, Does the projection *hit* anything?" [1] Even if we agreed to recognize "that religion reflects the fundamental life-experiences of man and that the driving impulses in these experiences are the most elemental instincts, such as food and sex," [2] we should still be bound to consider without prejudice the possible truth of the faith so reached. In such consideration, our task would not be to construct an elaborate argument for the being of God, as an inference from such experience; it would rather be

[1] *The Gospel and the Modern Mind*, by W. R. Matthews, p. 90.

[2] *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, by E. S. Ames, p. 50.

to maintain something already given in that experience, according to the interpretation of religion itself. The answer to the challenge is, in fact, precisely similar to that which might be made, and in philosophy has often been made, to the doubt of the existence of an external world. We have not so much to prove that something may exist as to remove the objections to retaining our intuitive and instinctive belief that it does exist. We have, then, to sustain the thesis that "The claim to trans-human validity continues upon the whole as present, operative, clear, in the religious intimations, as it continues present, operative, clear, in the intimations of the reality of an external world." [1]

At first sight, the ordinary man would say that it could not be sustained. He has grown up into the acceptance of a world of "real" objects, independent of his own thinking about them. He forgets, or has never considered, the obscure and tentative gropings of the infant, the gradual adjustment to its environment, the immense cumulative effect of habit and routine and social tradition. But let him ask himself how he becomes sure of the "reality" of any object external to himself, as distinct from, say, its presentation to him in a dream, and he will be surprised to find how subtle and complex the obvious can be. Why am I convinced of the "reality" of

[1] Von Hügel, *op. cit.*, p. 44, to which essay this section is deeply indebted. His whole discussion of "Religion and Illusion, and Religion and Reality" is the best treatment of the subject known to me. The most recent work on the subject is C. H. Valentine's *Modern Psychology and the Validity of Christian Experience.*

the birch-tree which grows opposite to my study window? Not because I can see its graceful and delicate foliage, for I have seen such things as clearly in a dream. Not because I can go out into the garden, and touch the trunk, for again I have *in a dream* made that actual test of an object that seemed illusory to sight alone. My real reasons for accepting the evidence of my eyes at the present moment are chiefly three. The perception is persistent; the tree remains there, and is never gone "as a dream when one awaketh." The perception is congruous with those that accompany it; the tree appears in a garden, and is not seen growing in the sky, as it might by some trick of aeroplane picture-writing. The perception is confirmed by general agreement; others see it as well as I, and I have no need to hurry in alarm to an oculist. Persistence, congruity and agreement—these are the foundations of my acceptance of an external world. But in what respect are they wanting to the testimonies of the religious consciousness? It is the persistence of a moral or religious impression which alone secures its often unwilling acceptance as authoritative. It is the congruity of its results with the whole experience of life—the pragmatic test, "by their fruits,"—with which no religious faith can for long dispense. As for the confirmation of "agreement," the practical universality of a religious consciousness of some kind or other is one of the most striking features of human experience[1]—so that scepticism, not faith, is the peculiar phenomenon, and may prove at last to be the actual illusion.

[1] See the first essay in this volume

It might fairly be claimed that if we were relatively as accustomed to the objects of faith as to those of sight, they would be not less "real" to us than these; indeed, to many men of deep religious experience the unseen world has become far more "real" than the seen, though most of us are at the infant stage in these things. We must also remember the far greater complexity and subtlety of the spiritual world with which the religious consciousness has to do. At its highest levels, the "values" of personality are not objects that can be seen or handled. Truth and beauty and goodness live in the delicate and elusive reactions of Spirit with spirit. God, the supreme Spirit, cannot be conceived as an object amongst other objects. His relation to us, for any adequate theistic conception, must be all-embracing and all-inclusive. His activity is not that of a "piecemeal" supernaturalism;[1] He is to be conceived as the home and source of all that makes our true life. "We love, because He first loved us." The values of personality both imply and reveal Him. They imply Him, because their compelling authority, their mysterious fascination, their "otherness" and inexhaustible wealth, are all inexplicable unless they exist already in superabundant fullness, and the values of personality can exist only in and for personality, in and for Spirit great enough to include Personality in its attributes. They reveal God, because they are the very content of His nature, because where they are, He is, not simply as a remote Bestower, but as an active spiritual Presence. "In the cases of these Intelligible Orders we have already

[1] James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 520.

something more or less religious." [1] Again and again, the attempt has been made to explain them on the human level, or to give them a religious value without God, and the attempts have always failed. But when the implicit logic of these values is recognized, and they are taken up into the religious consciousness, they obtain their noblest sanction, as God obtains in and through them His most adequate revelation, which is always life, and the whole of life. Our deepest need is to see *God* steadily and see *Him* in the whole of life. Christian faith gathers all these values into its vision of God.

IV

Within the great realm of spiritual realities creating the values which are recognized by the human consciousness as authoritative, the specifically religious values which gather round the Person of Christ for Christian faith occupy a unique place. The historical facts to which that faith is directed are not simply a great example of these values, as when we are bidden to share the faith of Jesus, nor are they simply a means to an end, as when the Incarnation is presented as a revelation of God, designed to produce a moral and religious influence on man. Christianity is a historical religion in a sense deeper than this. God's entrance into history is realization as well as revelation; it belongs to His very nature to share our sorrows and bear our sins, and He would not be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ if He had not done this. Nor is the manner of His doing it accidental or arbitrary.

[1] Von Hügel, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

"For in Christianity human nature is regarded as becoming not a passing disguise, but a permanent organ of the divine. . . . Man was, it teaches, from the first in the image of God, and the Son is eternally an element in the Godhead. That is, the union of God and man belongs to the very essence of both the one and the other." [1] To these words of a Christian philosopher, we may add those of a Christian theologian: "All genuine religion, especially Christianity, is revelational, evidential, factual—this also within the range of sense-and-spirit, and can never become a system of pure ideas or of entirely extra-historical realities." [2] But the recognition of this essential truth brings into view the peculiar difficulty of every appeal to religious experience as the basis of theological reconstruction. Christian experience is dependent on a historic revelation, yet it essentially consists in a personal response to God, known to be actively present in the personal consciousness. The consequence is that such experience is always entangled with historical data, themselves legitimately open to criticism, so that an element of uncertainty often creeps into it; on the other hand, when these data are ignored or minimized, Christian faith is weakened into a subjective mysticism, or easily loses its specifically Christian character. We may say, with a recent writer,[3] that "the religious experience without the vision of history would be empty, the historical event without the religious experience blind." Here,

[1] *Problems in the Relations of God and Man*, by C C. J. Webb, p. 240.

[2] Von Hügel, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

[3] Robert Winkler, in *Das Geistproblem*, p. 32, an admirably condensed statement of the modern approach through experience.

then, are two elements in the Christian experience which seem to base it on feet of mingled iron and clay—the *respective* strength or weakness being defined according to the predilections of the analyst. In contrast with this entanglement, the simple appeal to the authority of either Church or Bible seems to have a peculiar cogency, and has always a plausible simplicity.

But it may prove that the truth lies deeper. If and when God does enter into our experience, there will always be something we can understand, and always something that passes understanding. Both the psychology of religion and historical criticism are legitimate sciences and must be given full scope and receive full attention. But the Christian experience is of the unity of God's active presence, that unity which the familiar benediction describes: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit," the unity of access through Christ in one Spirit unto the Father.[1] We are dealing with a spiritual experience, and it is of the very nature of spirit to reach a unity by inclusion. There is an entanglement of body and soul, which leaves unsolved problems to both physiology and psychology, yet offers a working unity of experience. There is an apparently closed circle of psychical activities which leaves no place for human freedom, yet personality takes this closed circle up into its exercise of freedom.[2]

[1] 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Eph. ii. 18.

[2] See *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, by H. Wheeler Robinson, p. 292; cf. Wobbermin's use of the same figure of the closed circle for the problem now before us, in his *Systematische Theologie*, I, p. 405 f.

So we may think of that greater unity wrought by the Spirit of God, when He takes of the things of Christ and makes them the living tokens of His presence to faith. It is, indeed, the problem of the Incarnation itself repeated in the experience of the believer. The duality of natures is not a dualism. There could be no such unity of man and God in the Person of Christ, or in the experience of His disciples, if there were not spiritual kinship between man and God; but there could be no such fellowship as Christian experience postulates, if God were not other than, and infinitely more than, man, and had not made His "otherness" accessible and operative through the historical revelation of the Incarnation. History is reality, and its reality is part of its eternal meaning. No philosophy is adequate for Christian theology which does not make room for this reality, the real activity of God as well as of man. The "Jesus of history" is one with the "Christ of experience" because history is spiritual, and the Lord—the risen Lord of the New Testament faith—is the Spirit. The unity which faith affirmed then, the faith of Christian life affirms still, on the ground of an experience wrought through the Spirit.

V

A further aspect of this complex unity of Christian experience may be seen in the moral demands of faith, the kind of character needed in order to *know*. Here we may trace the historic influence of the Old Testament foundation for the New Testament faith. The "guest-psalms," for example (the fifteenth and twenty-fourth), describe

the character of the man who would claim sanctuary in Yahweh's house, in terms drawn from the teaching of the great prophets. The demands of those prophets are continued in the teaching of Jesus ; *the character of God is known only as it is shared*, and there is no salvation without such "knowledge" of God. In that cardinal truth lie in germ many subsequent problems of Christian theology, such as the relation of justification and sanctification, or of regeneration and conversion, or of divine grace and human freedom. There is no before and after in these deep realms ; we can speak at most of different aspects of the unity of experience, and call them by different names, according to our angle of approach. Both ethics and theology have their legitimate contributions to make, and are left facing each other with their inevitable problems ; but the interpreted unity of experience subtly harmonizes their contrasts.

With these more theoretical problems we are not here concerned, but there is a practical problem that has to be faced by most of us. The earnest seeker after God who has come to cry in sincerity, "O that I knew where I might find Him!" is frequently led to expect and to seek an answer in terms too exclusively intellectual. He labours to construct a "belief" where the only satisfying thing is a "faith," a personal trust and obedience making essential moral demands. There is some excuse for this misconception in the limitations of the English language, for unfortunately there is no verb corresponding with the noun "faith," and the reader, sometimes even the preacher, fails to recognize that "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" really

says, "Have *faith* in Him." The result of such misconception is not only that the battle for faith is often waged with but a part of our resources, but that the issue itself seems unfair. Truth is disguised in this or that intellectual garment; faith is made to depend on our acceptance of some doctrine which needs a scholar's training for its understanding.

The practical solution of the problem is obvious to those who have found their way through doubt to a genuine Christian faith, and it has repeatedly found illustration in the lives of such men. The example of Horace Bushnell will serve to show this; it is stated by himself in a passage known to be autobiographic:

—"there comes up suddenly the question, 'Is there, then, no truth that I do believe? Yes, there is this one, now that I think of it: there is a distinction of right and wrong that I never doubted, and I see not how I can; I am even quite sure of it.' Then forthwith starts up the question, 'Have I, then, ever taken the principle of right for my law; I have done right things as men speak; have I ever thrown my life out on the principle to become all it requires of me? No, I have not, consciously I have not. Ah! then, here is something for me to do! No matter what becomes of my questions—nothing ought to become of them if I cannot take a first principle so inevitably true, and live in it.' The very suggestion seems to be a kind of revelation; it is even a relief to feel the conviction it brings. 'Here, then,' he says, 'will I begin. If there is a God, as I rather hope there is, and very dimly believe, He is a right God. If I have lost Him in wrong, perhaps I shall find Him in right.'" [1]

We may go further than to point out the practical necessity of some such path, if the moral content of faith is to be known. The moral challenge con-

[1] *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell*, ed. of 1880, pp. 57–9.

cealed in the apparent disguise of truth becomes another proof of divine discipline. If the aim of the Christian revelation is not simply or chiefly to impart knowledge, but far more to develop character, to qualify men for a fellowship with God that does not rest on what others have said about Him, but on what He is in Himself, then intellectual difficulties form a necessary part of our training. There is no more impressive statement of this important truth than that of Robert Browning in the highly influential poem, "A Death in the Desert." We see the aged apostle, John, as the last link with the Jesus of history. He has committed to writing his testimony, but there are new conditions for those who never knew Jesus in His earthly life. The task and test of life is the learning love, and the proofs must shift to make the test valid and effective and man's progress real. The point for each generation to consider is whether the *present* evidence of faith is adequate, not whether the evidence that satisfied a past generation is still as effective for ourselves. So when we face our modern question whether religion be not projection from the mind of man we are but learning the wisdom of God:

> **Building new barriers as the old decay,**
> **Saving us from evasion of life's proof,**
> **Putting the question ever, "Does God love,**
> **And will ye hold that truth against the world?"**

VI

The final proof of both the validity of Christian experience and of the appeal to it as the basis for theological reconstruction must, on the principles

of this essay, be left to " The Future of Christianity." That proof will be found, so far as it can be found, in the success of the evangelism and the consistency of the theology which naturally spring from the appeal. That the evangelism of to-day is successful only with a limited class, and on the whole, with a class below a certain level of education, is apparent to all impartial observers. Doubtless, there will always be a place, and a legitimate place, for the appeal to authority, for the very principles of sound religious education require this. But even so, the spirit and emphasis of such use of the principle are more significant than the form, and these must be profoundly affected as the principles of historical criticism and its far-reaching results are slowly recognized. It cannot be claimed that theology has yet taken them into account with sufficient seriousness and thoroughness, whilst the consequences in popular exposition are still further to seek. But as they are realized, faith will indemnify itself by a clearer vision of what has been in Bible and Church the real foundation from the very beginning. Meanwhile, the time seems ripe for the patient working out of the great Christian doctrines from this starting-point. There will not be any startling results ; if there were, they would probably be wrong. But the present volume will show some of the ways in which old truths can be re-stated on the basis of Christian experience. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which lies nearest to it, is enriched by a new emphasis on its content, which we should seek in vain in the formalism of the ecclesiastical doctrine. The modern approach to the doctrine of the Incarnation, in con-

trast with the two-nature controversies of the history of dogma, recognizes the true unity of the Incarnate Person as vital to the real significance of the doctrine for Christian faith. The doctrine of divine forgiveness is interpreted in the light of all we know of human forgiveness at its highest, in the faith that personality is our highest category, and that there is a true kinship between the human and the divine. The social aspects of personality, again, of which modern philosophy has become so conscious, lead to more living conceptions of the Church and of its relation to the whole Kingdom of God, whilst the social and missionary applications of the Gospel claim a new and important place in any modern statement of Christian doctrine. In all these and other directions, clearer statement of principles and more intelligible interpretation of experience will react on the experience itself, as they always do. Yet, important as is the work of the theologian, it is always subsidiary to that of the evangelist, the missionary, the preacher and the pastor, with whom lies, under God, the "Future of Christianity."

III

THE PRESENT RELATIONS BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

By R. S. Franks, D.Litt.,
Principal of Western College, Bristol

I. Introduction

1. *THE relations between religion and culture possess a permanent importance.*

There is in an early work of Troeltsch [1] a noteworthy passage on the importance of the relations established between religion and general culture. In it the great philosophic theologian defines what he conceives to be the true task of the historian who concerns himself with the development of Christian theology. He will of course pay attention to the traditional religious ideas from which the development starts and also to the philosophical elements which it adds to them. But he should concentrate his gaze above all on the joins and seams between the two. He should have an eye for the tortuous and laborious discussions concerning "Faith and Reason."

What will be his reward? He will attain to the enjoyment of no great and exalted spiritual achievements. But he will obtain an insight into one of

[1] Troeltsch, *Vernunft und Offenbarung bei Johann Gerhard und Melanchthon*, 1891, pp. 2, 3.

the most difficult operations of the human mind. More than this, he will understand the true significance of theology, and will comprehend why its work is of such fundamental importance to religion that in spite of all failures it has perpetually to be resumed. A theology is absolutely necessary to every religion that seeks to maintain itself in the world. It forms the "silent co-efficient" of all preaching and teaching. It has the work of making possible the co-existence of a secular culture with religious truth. It has to remove beforehand whatever difficulties such a culture opposes to religion, and thus to prepare the way for the latter to do its own proper work. The actual delimitation of province established between the two may be imperfect and unsuccessful. Yet the question how they can exist together is the cardinal question of theology, so far as it is theology, and not simply confession of faith. The way the question is answered for the time being gives the key to the understanding of all the great theological systems.

2. *The modern appeal to experience does not render theology independent of philosophy.*

This careful and reasoned statement of Troeltsch only expresses in a more thorough and detailed way the sentiment of the popular adage that the battles of theology are often fought and won beyond its borders in the realms of philosophy. Some may be disposed to criticize popular adage and reasoned statement alike. Do we not, it may be said, found our theology to-day on immediate religious experience, and does not this make us independent of the perpetually changing philosophies of the time? It

is the object of this essay, not to deny, but rather to assert that Christian experience is the necessary foundation of Christian theology, and yet all the same to demonstrate that *such appeal to experience does not make us independent of philosophy, but is rather the modern form of relating theology to philosophy.* In the appeal to Christian experience it is implied that this experience has an objective reference, and the justification of this reference means philosophy of some kind. Apart from such objective reference theology would become simply a branch of empirical psychology, and its best stated doctrines would be (to borrow a happy illustration from St. Anselm) like pictures painted on air. In fact, even empirical psychology is no science till its domain is philosophically defined. We are therefore not surprised to find as the opening words of a brilliant book on the subject: "The way to psychology must proceed from philosophy." [1] It was the same feeling more immediately directed to the matter of theology that made the late Dean Rashdall declare: "A critique of religious experience is one of the most urgent desiderata of religious philosophy at the present moment." [2] To institute such a critique is of course impossible in a mere essay like the present.[3]

[1] Munsterberg, *Grundzüge der Psychologie*, Vol. I, 1900, p. 1.

[2] *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, 1919, p. 462.

[3] Karl Dunkmann has written an interesting and important book, *Religions philosophie*, 1917, with the sub-title, "Kritik der religiösen Erfahrung als Grundlegung christlicher Theologie." The Introduction to C. H. Weisse's *Philosophische Dogmatik*, 1855–62, is still valuable.

But we may very well try to answer the double question: Why do theologians at the present day appeal to experience, and what is the value of the appeal? It will be found that for the first part of our answer we shall have to go to history, while for the second we shall need to review the present situation of philosophy. It will further appear that each part of the answer centres about the figure of Schleiermacher, and that our problem turns out to be to explain the significance, and estimate the permanent worth, not only of his theology (which is generally admitted), but also of his philosophy.

II. The Historical Explanation of the Modern Appeal to Experience

1. *For many centuries Christian theology related itself to ancient philosophy.*

The first part of our question was: Why do modern theologians appeal to experience? Another passage from Troeltsch, taken this time from a posthumous work, may supply us with a starting-point for our answer. In it he asserts that for many centuries Christian theologians were in a position to connect the ideas of their religion with ancient philosophy. In this way, Christianity at the very beginning of its career came to make a compact between the "natural" revelation of ancient science and the revelation of the Bible, a compact which lasted well into the seventeenth century.[1]

In this connection Troeltsch speaks of the idealistic philosophy of antiquity with which Christianity thus

[1] *Glaubenslehre*, 1925, p. 62.

entered into relations as a " normal philosophy." It is only in the broad sense that the term is suitable. On the one hand, the alliance of Christianity in turn with Stoicism, Neoplatonism, and Aristotelianism meant a great deal of fresh and difficult readjustment, which is specially marked in the transition from a Neoplatonic to an Aristotelian epistemology in the thirteenth century. In other words, Troeltsch's " normal philosophy " itself covers a good many internecine conflicts. On the other hand, the " normal philosophy " was not the whole philosophy of antiquity, but left outside of itself at once the Epicurean materialism, the Academic scepticism, and the pantheistic interpretation of Aristotle that became so rife in the Middle Ages, from all of which Christianity had steadily to dissociate itself. Still, there was a normal philosophy, in the sense that the great names, first of Plato, and later of Aristotle, carried enormous respect and regard ; and a theology based on adhesion to their respective philosophical principles had undoubtedly a very great advantage in the general opinion of mankind.

2. *The end of this alliance came with the advent of the Kantian criticism. Kant treated religion merely as an appendix to morals.*

Such an advantage the modern theologian has to forgo. As Troeltsch says, the time-honoured compact between the Biblical revelation and the " normal philosophy " of antiquity has come to grief on two sides. On the one hand, there has been developed the method of exact scientific research, continually becoming more and more specialized, until all sight of a unity has been lost. On the other hand, there has

disappeared the presupposition of a firmly established metaphysic. The final result is that "modern thought is irrevocably divided along the lines of exact science and of philosophy of the spirit. We have continually two factors to deal with, each of which is itself mobile and is not without influence on the other." There is no longer a "normal philosophy."

What then is the present position? The phase of philosophical thought in which we at present live was introduced by the Kantian criticism. In his theoretic philosophy Kant firmly established the place of mathematics as the abstract science of space and time. Next to it as the fundamental concrete science of external experience came mathematical physics. For the world of internal experience in time only, there remained the equally concrete science of empirical psychology. Within the sphere of this theoretical philosophy, Kant condemned the traditional proofs for the Divine existence and for the immortality of the soul, and rejected as equally unprovable any *a priori* idea of the world as a whole. The "Critique of Pure Reason" was the tocsin of an intellectual revolution. One hardly wonders at the picturesque, though exaggerative, words of Heine: "This book is the sword with which in Germany theism was decapitated." [1] The words are exaggerative, because it was not of theism strictly speaking that Kant made an end, but of the traditional theistic proofs—the ontological which urges that the very idea of God as Infinite Being includes His existence, and the cosmological and teleological

[1] *Religion and Philosophy* (Eng. trans.), p. 172.

which argue to Him respectively as cause and designer of the world. Kant still thought to find a way to God through morals. His argument was simple. Man is under an absolute moral law, the law of his own conscience. He is yet by reason of his corporeal nature subject to a physical law which takes no account of morals. How then is a moral life possible in practice? It is only possible if there exists a God of Righteousness who is also the Ruler of the world, and who will rule the world in harmony with the moral law. Kant, however, insisted that this theism was only an inference from the certainty of morals. God was a necessary postulate of morality, just as was the freedom of the will. We should view the precepts of the moral law as Divine commands, but their authority depends not on their Divine origin but on their own nature. Religion becomes an appendix of morality.

3. *After Kant Positivism dismissed religion altogether, Hegelianism regarded it as merely a popular form of philosophy.*

Was this the best that modern philosophy could do towards finding a place for religion? When we review what it has actually done, we may say that it has in general moved along two opposite lines. One tendency has emphasized the negative aspect of Kantianism and has dismissed religion altogether, finding room only for the natural sciences and for a morality which has usually been founded, not on the idea of absolute obligation, but on utilitarian considerations. Here is the modern equivalent of the ancient Epicureanism, the type of philosophy with which Christian theology cannot ally itself.

A second tendency has sought in new forms to regain the idea of the world-unity which Kant had negated. Its principle is that nature and spirit, since they stand in such intimate relations, each acting and reacting on the other, must in root be one. For such a philosophy religion is a popular form of metaphysic. Its ultimate truth and that of metaphysic are one ; each in its own way proclaims the oneness of the finite and the Infinite. The relations of Christian theology with this type of philosophy have been more fluctuating, just as indeed they were with the pantheisms of antiquity : they have been relations, now of attraction, now of repulsion. Just as in the past theology allied itself with Neoplatonism and then dissociated itself from it, so modern theology has by turns made alliance with and war on Hegelianism.

4. *Schleiermacher appealed to experience to safeguard religion, but not to separate it altogether from philosophy.*

It was in the attempt to secure a firmer position for religion in the modern world that Schleiermacher, the real father of modern theology, was led to emphasize the independence of the religious experience. But it is most important to observe that this independence is not to be understood as so absolute as to cut religion loose from all philosophy. On the contrary, Schleiermacher's appeal to experience was supplemented by a carefully thought out philosophy. Its first principles are contained in his too-little-studied *Dialectic*, which is further expanded in his *Outline of Philosophical Ethics*.

Schleiermacher's doctrine in his two best known works, the *Speeches on Religion to its Cultured*

Despisers and the *Christian Faith* (his theological system), is indeed in the main psychologically stated. We are told in the former that religion is neither knowledge nor action, but is a feeling of the whole, accompanying both like a sacred music. In the latter, religion is said to be neither knowledge nor action but a special determination of feeling: it is a feeling of absolute dependence.

In the *Dialectic* we see more clearly the general view of the world which forms the background to the above assertions. Science rises to the Absolute by ever more inclusive concepts and more extended judgments. It is a social product, but is supported, not simply upon the sense of agreement with others, but also on the conviction that it is in touch with ultimate reality. Similarly, morality is a social product, but it rests finally upon the conviction that the moral law is absolute. Both science and morality in the end depend upon, and have in common, the conviction of being in touch with the Absolute. In religion man returns from the perpetual interchange of knowledge and action in which his life develops itself, into their common point, a deeply-felt unity with the reality that underlies alike the physical and the moral world. This is the philosophical background of Schleiermacher's whole religious construction, apart from which his doctrine of religion moves like a nebula in the void. It differs from the second above-described type of post-Kantian philosophy in two ways. Firstly, instead of trying, as that does, to rise from the critical to the absolute point of view in order to abide there, it endeavours only to make use of the notion of the Absolute as a stan-

dard by which duly to evaluate all empirical knowledge, while still retaining the critical standpoint. Secondly, it gives to religion a more independent place in the philosophical system, and indeed finds that without it there is no ultimate solution of the philosophical problem.

Such then is the historical explanation of our modern insistence on religious experience. It arises from the particular form which the problem of the relation of philosophy and theology has assumed in the modern world, as dominated by the Kantian criticism. We ask then next in order: How far at the present day, a century after Schleiermacher, can his fundamental position be maintained? There are two subordinate questions. In the first place, how far is Schleiermacher's psychological doctrine to be conserved? Secondly, how far is his philosophical basis tenable?

III. The Permanent Value of Schleiermacher's Psychology of Religion

1. *Schleiermacher's psychology of religion has been criticized and developed by Ritschl and Otto.*

It is to be admitted that Schleiermacher's doctrine of religious experience is too pantheistic. It has been noted that in the *Speeches* he describes religion as a feeling of the whole, which accompanies knowledge and action like a sacred music. Ritschl has criticized this view of religion as too æsthetic: it is too little distinguishable from the sense of beauty as the harmony of the cosmos. Ritschl's own psychology of religion is better, and makes clearer the essential difference of religion from æsthetic. In

religion, says Ritschl, man seeks assurance of his worth as a moral person in spite of the fact that he is a part of nature. This assurance he finds in the thought of God as the Supreme Moral Personality, who is also the Ruler of nature, directing it to moral ends. Here obviously we have Kant's moral proof for the Divine existence in a psychological form. But Ritschl is too good a theologian to think that religion can be treated as a supplement of morals. He holds like Schleiermacher to the independence of religion. The psychology of religion shows how man is led to God, but this thought is no mere assumption or postulate. "In religion," says Ritschl, "the thought of God is given." [1] In other words, though religious experience refers to what is super-sensible, it makes upon the mind an impression of reality, just as does the manifestation through the senses of the external world. To overlook this important fact is to miss the essential nature of religion.

If religion is truly independent of knowledge and action, and if in religion the thought of God is given, then (putting these two things together) we may say that religion reveals a Being who, though He is the Sponsor of the Moral Law and the Ruler of Nature, is not merely Righteousness or Omnipotence or even both in one, but is of a nature transcendent and unique. This is the truth to the assertion of which Otto's remarkable book *The Holy* is directed. Its fundamental thought is that while the psychology of religion may show the way from other regions of human consciousness to the consciousness of God, it can complete its work only by exhibiting Him as

[1] *Justification and Reconciliation* (Eng. trans.), I, p. 17.

altogether transcendent of the relations that connect Him with the world. Religion knows Him as the "Entirely Other," the "Mysterium tremendum et fascinans." Though He be the ground of nature and of morals, and indeed of beauty also, He is not exhausted in any of His manifestations, but in His uniqueness and soleness transcends them all.

2. *In essence Schleiermacher's psychology of religion still stands.*

The above criticisms and developments of Schleiermacher's doctrine of religion do not essentially affect its value. They are rather directed to ensure its central idea, viz., the independence of religion in relation to all other modes of psychic activity. This can be secured only if religious feeling is sufficiently distinguished from æsthetic feeling, and if the uniqueness of the object of religion is adequately brought out.

IV. The Abiding Value of Schleiermacher's Philosophy

What, then, as to the second question? how far can we still maintain Schleiermacher's philosophical basis for his doctrine of religious experience?

1. *Schleiermacher's philosophy need not fear comparison either with Positivism or with Hegelianism.*

In the first place, it is clear that no adequate doctrine of religion can be reached from a positivistic or naturalistic philosophical foundation. If our knowledge is limited to the physical sciences and our morality to utilitarianism, no religion worthy of the name is possible. A religion such as Comte's is only a glorified ethic. The best that positivism can

do for religion (and it is a poor best) is to be seen in the agnosticism of Spencer. But it is on the side of its ethics that positivism especially breaks down. A utilitarian morality can never explain the sense of absolute obligation which is the very foundation of true morality. Thus we have to go back to Kant to obtain a firm basis for ethics, and if we go back to Kant we must necessarily go forward again to Schleiermacher. Religion has every whit as much right to claim experience of the Absolute as has morals, and a philosophy that cannot find a place for religious experience is simply an incomplete and imperfect philosophy.

More formidable to religion is in reality the type of philosophy that professes to accept religious testimony to the supersensuous, but in the end reduces religion only to a popular form of metaphysic. All such philosophy proceeds essentially upon the lines laid down by Hegel, according to which Metaphysic is described as the truth of religion. Religion, however, cannot be satisfied with this position, nor is it necessary to defend religion in this ambiguous way. We may rather take refuge in some pregnant sentences from Schleiermacher's *Outline of Philosophical Ethics*: "All knowledge is completely understood only when the special knowledge included under it is completely understood. Until then there is no reason why knowledge should not be regarded as in process of development alike at all points."[1] Metaphysic and Religion do in fact both deal with the Absolute, but they deal with it in different ways.

[1] *Grundniss der philosophischen Ethik. ed. Twesten*, 1841, p. 4

The one reaches out to it along the line of pure knowledge as far as that will take it. But the other seeks it along the line of personal devotion and communion. We have two lines which, if they meet, meet at infinity. The most that we can do is to show that the two lines point in the same direction, even if we cannot see their meeting-point.

2. *Schleiermacher's philosophy is capable of being restated in modern terms. The first point is to note the teleological connection of nature and spirit.*

We begin by returning to the cleavage that has already been noted between the natural sciences and the philosophy of the spirit. This division is fundamental for all modern thought, and leads often to the attempt to simplify the situation by a suppression of one of the two sides of the antithesis. Either natural science is made the whole and the claims of the spirit are entirely, or almost entirely, disregarded, which leads to the positivistic solution of the world-riddle already rejected, or else a beginning is made from the other end, and a philosophy of values is propounded in which Truth, Beauty and Goodness are made the ultimate realities, while nature is construed simply as a revelation of these fundamental values in a form apparently alien to them. Such a doctrine, however brilliantly it is worked out, fails to carry conviction. Nature appears too great and too independently real to be treated simply as a " visible language " in which the eternal values are temporarily expressed.

There remains, however, the possibility of an ascription of an independent reality alike to nature and the values, and of a refusal to reduce the two

factors to a premature unity by the suppression of one. But then, along with this refusal to suppress either factor, we may observe in experience a teleological connection between them. Of course the attempt to get rid of all teleology from philosophy has often been made, notably by Spinoza, who says that nature has no fixed aim in view, and that all final causes are fabrications of men—in fact, that all teleology is mere prejudice.[1] But against this view of Spinoza may be set that of Hume, who was clear-minded enough to see that at least there was a teleology in the connection of the course of nature and the succession of our ideas. "Had not the presence of an object instantly excited the idea of those objects commonly conjoined with it, all our knowledge must have been limited to the narrow sphere of our memory and senses; and we should never have been able to adjust means to ends, or employ our natural powers either to the producing of good or avoiding of evil. Those who delight in the discovery and contemplation of *final causes*, have here ample subject to employ their wonder and admiration." [2]

If we go as far as this, must we not necessarily go further and, however inexplicable it may seem, admit a teleology that reaches even to the highest values of the human spirit? However difficult it may be to unite in one clear conceptual scheme natural science and spiritual philosophy, it remains a fact that the values of the spirit are produced upon the basis of nature. They do not, nevertheless, cease

[1] *Ethics*, Part I, Appendix.

[2] *An Enquiry concerning the Human Understanding*, § 44.

to be spiritual values altogether different from the principles of nature. But the connection is unmistakable. There is in experience an ascending scale which leads from matter and motion at the one end, through life and consciousness, to the values of truth, beauty and goodness at the other. Life is only possible upon the basis of chemical changes; chemical changes, again, depend upon physical changes: all goes back to matter and motion. But life, again, develops consciousness, and out of consciousness spring self-conscious reason and will, for which alone the high values exist and through which they find incorporation in the life of the world. Dr. Lloyd Morgan has described the principle of this continuous development by the illuminating name of "emergent evolution." Chemistry is more than physics, life is more than chemistry, consciousness is more than life, self-conscious reason and will transcend mere consciousness, and the values rise like a constellation of shining stars upon self-conscious reason and will to guide them on the pathway to eternity. Yet the natural is necessary to the spiritual development. As St. Paul said long ago, there is first that which is natural and afterwards that which is spiritual.

8. *The second point of the restatement of Schleiermacher is to recognize the due place of the Values in the teleological scheme.*

Where now in this scale is religion to be placed? We must look more carefully at the elements of our teleological scheme. We have further to employ in more detail the principle quoted above from Schleiermacher: "All knowledge is completely

understood only when the special knowledge included under it is completely understood. Until then there is no reason why knowledge should not be regarded as in process of development at all points." In spite of all efforts to unify our knowledge and in spite of our perception of a teleological connection among the things included under it, there remain in it many gaps and rifts, which indeed, in experience, we continually pass over, but which, all the same, our logic is unable to close. We have in the first place all the elements that may be grouped under what may fairly be called an objective view of the world. These possess a certain unity among themselves, yet that unity is imperfect and contains many rents and fissures. Here are to be found the facts of physics and chemistry, the facts of biology, the facts of psychology. There is a gap between physics and chemistry, and again between chemistry and biology, and between biology and psychology, whatever may have been done in recent years to reduce those cleavages. Yet in the main we observe a unity of method in all these sciences : in all of them the law of causal explanation reigns and continually widens its sovereignty. They are all sciences in the strict sense, and in a certain way they cover the whole field of actuality.

Yet how much they leave out ! We pass over to what may be called with equal fairness the subjective point of view and we have the whole of experience over again as it were from the inside. Here we are not concerned with empirical psychology as an objective science attempting to understand mental processes as a causal sequence. We enter into the

life of the individual spirit as freely directed towards an aim, and again (though no doubt passing over a gap in thought) we enter into the life of societies working towards common ends. The development of science, art, morals and religion is now viewed as a form of conduct in which man reacts to his environment and strives towards ends which he more dimly or more clearly conceives.

But there is a third stage and another hiatus. So far as we have gone we have not extricated the true values of the human spirit from the objects desired as "good," or (as we may for shortness say) the "goods" in which they are embodied in the course of human history.[1] These objects for which men strive appear finite: they have a social and cultural reference. Knowledge is sought, but it is at first technical rather than strictly scientific. Objects of art are created, but their beauty is at the beginning only an enhancement and decoration of their utility. A social well-being is kept in view, but it is to begin with no more than the well-being of the clan or the tribe. The true values appear and distinguish themselves from the more or less limited "goods" in which they are incorporated, when science is sought

[1] I borrow this useful distinction from Rickert's essay, "Vom Begriff der Philosophie," in *Logos*, Vol. I, 1910, pp. 1–34. See especially p. 11. "There are objects, which, as we say, have value, or in which worth inheres, and which in consequence themselves also we call values. A work of art, for example, is such an object-reality. But we can easily see that the value which inheres in it does not exactly coincide with its actuality. . . . We shall therefore call such object-realities connected with values 'goods' in order to distinguish them from the values inhering in them."

for truth's sake, when the artist conceives the ideal of pure beauty, and when the all-compelling notion of the right dawns upon men's minds. Truth, Beauty, Goodness—these supreme values transcend all their temporary embodiments and draw on the soul of man to higher and ever higher and nobler aspiration and effort.

4. *The third point of restatement is to recognize the supremacy of the "Holy" among the Values.*

Where then, we ask again, in this scale of things is religion to be found? The first answer to this question is that in the religions of the world, which from an external point of view may be regarded as social or cultural products, yet another value appears besides the True, the Good and the Beautiful, namely the Holy, the idea of a supernatural life, or of communion with God. All the religions of the world, even the lowest, strive after something better than things as they now are, after a salvation, a beatitude, the power of an endless life. But if this be so, what is the relation of this new value to the three other great values? Do the four form, as one modern philosopher says, a federation of co-equal and co-eternal values? [1] Or are others right when they see in religion the principle that in some way unites and conserves the other values? [2] The truth seems to be that in the beginning religion is the matrix out of which all the values develop. We see this plainly in the history of Greece: Greek religion was before either Greek science or Greek art or Greek

[1] Volkelt, *System der Aesthetik*, Vol. III, pp. 534 ff.

[2] Dunkmann, *op. cit.*; Munsterberg, *Philosophie der Werte*, 1908.

ethics. But even when the different values have assumed their relative independence, and the True, the Beautiful, the Good and the Holy are all discriminated, religion in some way retains a touch of the original wholeness out of which all sprang. Only this wholeness, however, can ultimately satisfy the nature of man. If truth could be attained without goodness or either of these without beauty, there would be no final satisfaction. It is in religion that the root-unity and final wholeness of all these glorious values stands revealed through a unique experience that transcends each individually and all together. Perhaps the best illustration of the metaphysical overplus that religion adds to the values is to be found in the musical overplus that the harmony of the chord adds to its individual notes. We do not wonder that the musician should say:

> "I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
> That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound,
> but a star."

But we may say that the gift is entrusted to man in a still higher degree in religion. It is an experience of union with God who is the True, the Good and the Beautiful in One, and who, beyond all that, is the Holy, enhancing these noble values with a supernatural power and grace. The fullest conception of such a union with God is seen in the Christian idea of the Kingdom of God, which is that of a life abidingly true and real, ethically good and satisfyingly harmonious, entirely sustained by the grace of God.

5. *The final point of restatement is that philosophy will succeed, as it is inspired by religion.*

How then is religion related to philosophy? Philo-

sophy, too, seeks the unity of the True, the Good and the Beautiful, but also the unity of the "goods" in which they are temporally incorporated and of the physical cosmos in which these "goods" are realized. When philosophy rises to the height of its mission, it is neither simply objective, nor simply subjective, nor yet a philosophy of "goods" merely, or of values merely. Its aim is the comprehension and inclusion of all these partial views and aspects of the world. What philosophy is perpetually seeking, religion has in its own way already attained. It has already intuitively comprehended the unity of the world for which philosophy is perpetually searching. Consequently the philosophies which most completely shadow forth the cosmic unity are those which go to work in a religious spirit. Examples may be seen in the great creative systems of Richard Rothe [1] and Christian Hermann Weisse,[2] both of which aim to interpret the whole of modern knowledge from the standpoint of religion. It may be added that much of Weisse's system is conserved in the better known system of Lotze, Weisse's pupil, whom Dr. Rashdall once called the one truly modern Christian philosopher.[3]

It is true that such philosophies as those of Rothe and Weisse are of the nature of phantasy rather than of science. It must indeed necessarily be so. To quote yet another aphorism from Schleiermacher: "Knowledge in advance of reality is phantasy." [4]

[1] *Theologische Ethik.*
[2] *Philosophische Dogmatik.*
[3] *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 1902, p. 186.
[4] *Dialektik*, ed. Halpern, 1903, p. 219, note.

A world-view of the above kind, in closing the gaps which actually exist in our knowledge of the cosmos, inevitably bridges them over only with the help of the imagination. All our science is partial: we know piecemeal only. Hence a philosophy that seeks to be purely scientific tends to be partial also. Either it gains unity by the suppression of vital elements, or its unity is only the unity of an aggregate. Only an imaginative world-view conceived in the spirit of religion can ever hope to interpret the whole.

V. Conclusion. The Relation and the Distinction of Philosophy and Theology

Let us return to our beginning. We started with the problem of faith and reason as the fundamental theological problem. What solution of it have we found for the present day? Our result is: Science is exact, but it is partial only. Religion already has the whole, but only intuitively. Philosophy seeks to conserve as much as may be of the exactness of science, and yet to include the whole like religion. It is therefore necessarily a sketch in outline rather than a finished product.

And what of theology in its difference from religion, theology as reflection upon religion? It begins as an analysis of religious experience, but widens out into a view of the world. Its distinction from philosophy is that it begins from the unity of religion and works outwards, endeavouring to interpret the facts of the cosmos, while philosophy starts from the cosmic facts and works inwards to a final unity. Even when philosophy is religious, it is concerned

first with the world and then with God; whereas theology is concerned above all with God and only secondarily with the world. We may perhaps say that Theology reaches out a hand from the sphere of religion, and Philosophy another from the domain of science. Sometimes the hands do not meet at all, sometimes they meet for a moment or for longer. But their complete alliance will never be achieved as long as we know in part and prophesy in part. Only when partial knowledge gives place to perfect knowledge will their alliance be absolutely firm and sure.

IV

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

By Charles F. D'Arcy, D.D.,
Archbishop of Armagh

WHEN, having cleared his mind as much as possible from the prepossessions which have arisen from education and habits of thought, the thinker approaches this tremendous question with the determination to face honestly its greatest difficulties, he finds himself appalled. The immeasurable world in space and time, the inconceivably extended history of animated nature, the story of mankind stretching back to-day into remote periods undreamt of by our fathers, the confused and contradictory ideas and practices which, taken altogether, are grouped under the name Religion: all these confront him and seek their explanation in a single word. He must also take some account of the various and conflicting philosophies which the mind of man has been able to shape. Well may he ask, Is it reasonable, is it possible, to suppose that there is One Being, or one principle, to which may be traced this whole, if it be a whole, containing elements so many, so diverse, so seemingly discordant?

There is but one answer to this question: the mind is so constituted that it cannot avoid regarding the

sum-total of all existence, no matter how various its contents, as a Universe. Here indeed is the faith on which ultimately all life and knowledge depend. There must be a final consistency in things: there must be a Unity of some kind underlying all thinking and living. Otherwise thought and life are both impossible. Here is the basis of knowledge. The question, What is truth? may be ambiguous and delusive, as Kant thought. But unless we hold in some sense that what is true to-day will be true to-morrow, we dare not think and we cannot know. Unless there is a firm substratum of coherency beneath all the operations of our minds and sustaining the very existence of the things that our minds apprehend, there is nothing to be said on any subject.

We start, therefore, with the conviction that there is such a reality as the Universe, and that we may reasonably consider man's place in it, and his relation to the larger powers which work in it.

It is not possible, within the limits of this essay, to trace the history of how man came to believe in God. An immense literature now deals with all the phases and forms of belief and practice which are called Religion. We cannot here inquire whether the term animism properly describes the primitive type, or whether there was, in the beginning of human history, a monotheistic faith; nor can we examine the distinction between religion and magic. It is, however, worthy of note for our purpose that Religion, in some form, however it may be defined, appears to be a universal characteristic of human culture. And as such it is closely connected with man's social life and with the customs which rule his behaviour. There

seems to be clear evidence, for example, that palæolithic man had some belief in a future life, and it is certain that the neolithic cultivators worshipped deities of vegetation and fertility. When we come to the dawn of history, whether in Crete, Egypt, or Mesopotamia, or in the further East, we find gods everywhere, gods who fall into polytheistic groups. Sometimes the heavens seem to be as populous as the earth. Nor is this surprising, for if, as is usual, the gods are related in thought with elements or forces in nature, they will naturally be as numerous and as various in character and function as the elements they represent. To us, polytheism seems a strange impossible creed; but to the mind of more primitive man it is inevitable that gods should be as many and as diverse as the agencies and influences which impress his imagination and affect his life. The histories of Hebrew religion, of Greek philosophy, and of Indian theology, show in various ways with what difficulty the soul of man struggles upwards out of the welter of polytheism into the unity of a nobler faith.

We have seen that the conception of a Universe is implied as a pre-supposition in our thought and life. But it may be doubted whether this conception ever emerged out of its primitive obscurity until man had been able to think of God as One, either in the way of theism or of pantheism. To the pantheist, God and the Universe are confused, the one merging in the other: to the theist they stand in clear antithesis, the Universe depending upon God.

So stood the order of things, in the mind of humanity, until the rise of modern science. True it is that, both in ancient and in later times, there were

bold spirits which, greatly daring, ventured to doubt or deny. But their audacity was either a passionate revolt or the isolated reaction of some revolutionary epoch. For mankind as a whole, God and the World remained the supreme indisputable certainties.

In the modern age, the growth of science, transforming man's conception of the Universe, extending it indefinitely in space and time, examining it in detail and revealing its incredible complexity, establishing relationships of cause and effect and producing an impression of self-sufficing necessity, has effected a momentous change in the perspective of human thought. Why look beyond the great reality of interrelated facts which now fills the whole field of our vision? For many, God has vanished, the Universe is all. Nor, to the modern mind, does this Universe stand, like the Eastern Brahma, for abstract Being, universal and all-embracing. It is, on the contrary, an infinitely rich and varied content, attracting our interests and occupying our faculties, and capable of yielding, in its unending variety and capacity for exciting surprise, a wealth of enjoyment to which no limit can be discerned. The modern world is not, like the ancient world in the first centuries of our era, wearied and disillusioned. Quite the contrary: it is eager for knowledge, for discovery, for enjoyment, for adventure. Even the Great War could not damp its ardour or depress its spirit. It is for this reason that the world of to-day does not trouble itself much about the greatest of all questions. Fifty years ago, men who doubted called themselves agnostics, and men who denied were frankly atheists. Now, politely tolerant of all kinds of opinion, men accept the forms of religion

as tolerable elements in a civilized life, and do not worry about the ultimate meanings, feeling vaguely that the problems raised are too difficult for solution

There is, however, one element in the religious experience of mankind which does evoke real and intense interest. The world of to-day has become aware of the psychical. It attaches more weight to the science of psychology than wise students of that science claim for it. It is learning that thoughts, desires, and emotions are quite as real in their own way as the things of the physical world are in theirs. Out of this new apprehension has emerged the realization that religious experience is a fact of serious import. A copious literature is dealing with mysticism. The records of the mystics are examined with minute care, their writings having emerged from a prolonged obscurity. The various phases of religious emotion and their reaction upon life excite intense interest among scientific students of psychology. It is recognized that here is one of the most significant elements in human experience.

In those experiences which are called mystical, the soul seems to come into spiritual contact with a supreme Reality in which it finds its end and complete satisfaction. Even this language is too weak and faint for the experience as it is described by those who have known it. Self is utterly lost in the Infinite. There is a bliss of self-negation and total surrender in which all distinctions fade away and the soul is merged in the Divine.

For those who have had this experience it remains as a vision of the highest truth of which man is capable ; and, to Christian mystics, it is the supreme

demonstration of the Being of God. For them, God is known to be, and to be the greatest of all Realities, not by authority or education, or by argument, but by actual experience.

It is only to rare souls, and to them only when they seek it by long self-discipline, that this great vision of God is granted. Hence it may seem something peculiar and exotic, something which, as not common, even to religious minds, must be abnormal, perhaps delusive. This suspicion does certainly attach itself to many accounts of mystical experience. But there is an experience which is so frequent and so clearly normal in Christian life that it must be regarded as characteristic of it. However this experience be explained, the fact cannot be doubted. It is perhaps best defined as the sense of presence in prayer. "Thou, when thou prayest," said Christ, "enter into thine inner chamber, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." In these words there is certainly intended a contrast with the obtrusive publicity of Pharisaic devotions; but the teaching goes far deeper than that. The "inner chamber" is no mere room shut in by material walls, it is rather the central sanctuary of the soul, for it is there that the soul meets with the Father who "is in secret." And it is the simple direct communion of a child with a Father which is here indicated. The soul face to face with God in spiritual intercourse—that universal experience of all the Christian centuries—is the fact which our Lord describes. This is prayer as He regards it; and as He practised it, as the Gospels testify. It is surely clear that this direct communion with God in the inner sanctuary of the soul is the

central fact of spiritual experience as presented to us in the teaching and example of Jesus.

The essential elements in this experience are: the Soul present with God; and the sense of this presence pervaded by the same sort of trust as that which enables a child to approach a father. The simplicity of the relationship is the mark of its reality. And it is clear, from all our Lord's teaching, that He regarded this intercourse as depending on faith in the unfailing love of God, a faith justified by every experience.

It would seem that it is this central fact of the Christian life which has, in all ages of Christian history, kept faith alive and afforded inspiration for advance and reformation. It may be detected in the records of every saintly life, and in every movement towards a higher realization of the Christian ideal. And to-day, in a world full of influences which are either neutral or hostile in relation to religion, it is this experience of a personal contact with God, through Christ, which keeps Christianity alive. Though often hidden behind the outward forms of expression here is always the inward life.[1]

When we endeavour to pass, from the kind of conviction which inheres in mystical experience and in that simpler experience we have just considered, to a conviction which can justify itself at the bar of the

[1] Otto's work on the *Idea of the Holy* is a very valuable contribution to the literature of Religious Experience. But it is concerned rather with the foundations of all religion than with the Christian doctrine of God. For this latter, the characteristic Christian experience, which has stood the test of all the Christian centuries, seems the only sure foundation.

critical reason, we find it necessary to make a distinction. It has been strongly argued that, while mystical experience affords real ground for believing that, in it, "men come into contact with some Reality, or some aspect of Reality, which they do not come into contact with in any other way," there is no reason to think that this Reality is personal. Mr. C. D. Broad [1] thinks we are inclined to believe it to be personal, because we are familiar with the religious experiences of Western Europeans and Jews, most of whom adopt this interpretation, an interpretation which, as he points out, Easterns mostly reject.

As against the argument for a personal God from mystical experience, it must be admitted that there is much force in Mr. Broad's contention ; and not merely for the reason which he gives, but also for the further reason that, in mystical experience, the limits of personality seem to melt away, and the soul seems to be lost in the Infinite. It is on this account, no doubt, that Eastern mystics reject the idea of personality as applied to the Absolute. But this contention loses its force when we turn to the universal Christian experience of Communion with God ; for here the very essence of the Spiritual intercourse is personal—God and the soul face to face, as Father and child. Confidence and love, essentially personal relationships, are fundamental. There is no loss of identity. There is no merging like a drop in the ocean of being. The self retains its self-hood. Nay, it finds itself augmented as a self, and endowed with new powers and greater distinctness, because of its contact with the Father of Spirits.

[1] *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1925.

It must here be affirmed with the greatest emphasis that, from the Christian point of view, this is the only faith in God which is worth having. No cold deism, no remote Absolute, no mere transcendent Creator, no mere immanent Reason, can satisfy the spiritual needs of those who have once tasted the Christian experience. A Personal God, One who can be trusted and loved, who can be known in actual experience, who is ever present and ever accessible as "Our Father"; such is God as revealed to us in and by Jesus Christ.

It is hardly possible at this stage in our argument to pass by without notice a psychological objection which has been raised of late. It is said that the apparently objective element in every religious experience is only a "projection" of the mind. "The Father," for example, is known to the soul in prayer, because, deep in the sub-conscious life, there is a "father-complex." But surely, in the psychical as in every other department of knowledge, we must distinguish between the false and the true, that is, between elements which are delusive and elements which stand the test of long and varied experience. Moreover, the objects known to the religious consciousness are not accidental or idiosyncratic. They have behind them a history as old as humanity.[1]

We now approach a tremendous heart-shaking question: Can this faith in God as "Our Father" be correlated with that wide knowledge of the Universe as it actually is which modern science has given to us, and with our experience of human life? Many modern minds say plainly that it cannot. Many

[1] See Essay II, by Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson, for a fuller discussion of this question.

others, while hesitating to pronounce judgment, feel that here is a paralysing difficulty. Let us endeavour to confront this difficulty as frankly and fearlessly as possible.

(1) The first source of perplexity is the mechanical conception of nature. The processes of the material world are explained in terms of dynamics and chemistry. More and more mathematics is dominating the physical sciences. Everything seems either calculable or to pass beyond calculation because our methods are not yet good enough. The new doctrine of relativity is itself mainly an interpretation of mathematical formulæ. In biology, mechanistic explanations of vital processes multiply. Though vitalism makes fierce inroads from time to time, trace the course of the science through several generations, as Mr. Needham has done,[1] and the steady advance of mechanism is unmistakable. The effect of all this is to make the world appear as a vast mechanical system in which every event follows inevitably and in which there is no real place for the spiritual. The latter seems but a fitful phosphorescence playing for a little while over the surface of an iron necessity.

Against this interpretation, it can be maintained that the fundamental concepts of mechanical explanation are themselves mental constructions. But a simpler observation will suffice for our present purpose.

In human experience, mechanism appears as a device by which man effects his purposes in dealing with material things. The spade, the plough, the sword, the bow and arrows, were created by mind in order to enable it to master the opposing forces of

[1] See his essay in *Science, Religion and Reality.*

nature, animate or inanimate. Nor was man able to make tools and use them until he had observed some constancy in Nature. Some recognition of order, or law, in Nature was necessary in order that he might bend natural forces to his will. It is a very curious fact that the conception of natural law as developed by physical science seems to many modern thinkers to deny the freedom of man's moral life and to reduce him to the position of a mere link in the chain of natural causes.

A wider view will disclose the truth that the uniformities of Nature are the very means by which man effects all his purposes in dealing with natural forces. If the processes of Nature were not governed by law—if, that is, we could not depend on natural forces to act in one way rather than in another—man would find himself absolutely helpless in the face of the complexities of the world about him. Every use of materials, no matter how simple, depends upon the qualities of these materials and the constancy with which these qualities operate. It is because there are laws in Nature which may be depended on that man can grow his crops, build his houses, make his roads, navigate his ships, construct and work all his machinery. The Laws of Nature are, in fact, the very charter of human liberty.

It is an extraordinary perversion of mind, due to a strange abstraction of the theoretical from the practical, which produces the impression that Science, in demonstrating the prevalence of law in Nature, is striking at the freedom of the human will, or even rendering impossible all belief in the reality of the spiritual. The fact is that, as the creation of

mechanism is the very means by which mind dominates matter, so, in the theoretical realm, the discovery of law, the discernment of mechanical processes in natural events, the reduction of phenomena to constancy in the sequence of cause and effect, is the clearest possible proof of the supremacy of the spiritual. Every machine constructed gives to man some new power over the forces of Nature. And every mechanical process discovered in Nature adds something to that store of knowledge by which man is able to use material things for his own purposes.

Take an illustration. Nothing seems to excite more alarm in minds which are sensitive to the supposed advance of materialism than the advocacy of mechanistic processes in biology. One of the most remarkable discoveries of recent years has been that of "hormones," those strange messengers which, produced in special glands of the body, circulate throughout the whole, and, by attaching themselves to those organs for which they are specially prepared, regulate growth and development in correspondence with the economy of the whole organism. Here is a process, it might appear, which cannot possibly be physical. Yet it has been shown that these messengers are chemical in their nature and action. And what has been the result? Just because of this very quality the discovery is leading to new methods in the treatment of disease. The fact is, in order to use a thing for his own purposes, man must know how it works; and this knowledge, instead of limiting his spiritual freedom, increases it.

Now, is it not absurd to suppose that this quality in things, by which man finds them measurable and

obedient to his will, renders them altogether alien and intractable in relation to God? Assuming the existence of God as a supremely powerful personal Being in close relationship with the whole universe of material things, are we to suppose that He is the only personal Being who finds mechanical processes, with the knowledge of them, an insuperable barrier in the way of dealing with them? The supposition is absurd.

Why then, it may be asked, is it that we do not find Him interfering in the course of events in ways which obviously demonstrate His power, just as we can so clearly detect the operations of human agents? Miracles on a vast scale, it may be urged, ought to be constantly evident. But surely it is far more in accordance with the view we have now gained to suppose that the Supreme Being, touching His universe at every point, and using at the same time all the mechanical processes of it as the means of His operations, controls it throughout by the normal agency of its laws and forces and not by interferences of any kind. It is surely clear that it is only man, with his limited knowledge and partial grasp of material forces, whose work can be described as *interference*. True it is that in former times the action of God in the world seemed naturally to assume the shape of interference with the regular order of things. May we not regard it as one of the truths we have to learn from Science that this old view of Divine activity was too small and too anthropomorphic to be a true description of the ways of God?

(2) The second great difficulty in the way of accepting the doctrine of a Personal God is the immense

volume of suffering in the animate world, and of suffering and sin in human life. This is no new problem: but it has certainly been accentuated by the history of creation as unfolded by modern science. In days when men thought of the world as created only a few thousand years ago, and as formed by the Creator, and left by Him, in a state of perfect happiness and moral purity, and then defiled by a definite act of rebellion, from the effects of which it was soon to be cleansed by a great Divine interposition, the problem of evil could be regarded as an unhappy incident, a passing phase, in the eternal history of the Universe. But we are taught by a whole cycle of the Sciences that the world is many millions of years old, that living things have existed upon it for millions of years, that man himself, though relatively a newcomer, can be traced back for probably hundreds of thousands of years, and that all through that great history living creatures struggled with one another, devoured one another, inflicted and suffered pain; and that, when man appeared, he dwelt in no happy, perfect Eden, but fought, a creature of dawning powers, among wild beasts, until he gradually won for himself some degree of security, and of what we now call civilization. In this tremendous story we find pain far more deeply rooted in life, and sin far more seemingly inevitable, than in the old story of our childhood. The Creator, if there be a Creator, seems far more directly responsible for the sufferings and sins of His creatures than He appears to be in the Biblical account. For, in the scientific account, the fierce competition which brings pain and sin is part of the order of things from the beginning.

What can we say in answer to this question? Let us begin with the more difficult part of it. On account of its moral quality, the problem of evil is far more terrible than the problem of pain. How can a God who can be described as a good and loving Father have brought into existence a world in which the fierce strife of one living thing with another was inevitable? But the problem is not really as difficult as it seems. For only in a world in which the individual is gifted with the power of free choice could a moral order arise. A world devoid of individual freedom would be a world of machines, a world without goodness or love, or even the possibility of these. To bring about the existence of a world in which feeling and thinking beings could enter into moral and social relationship, and in which they could be fitted to know and love God, a tremendous risk had to be taken: moral freedom had to be launched upon its age-long adventure, and gifted with the power of choice between good and evil, in order that, by a right use of its opportunities, it might ultimately attain to harmony in a moral and social order under the rule of God. There was, and, from the nature of things, there could be, no other way. Here we have the true meaning of the narrative of the Fall as we read it in the book of Genesis. The truth there expressed is the fundamental principle of all life.

It is profoundly interesting to observe that biological science is now tracing a primitive indeterminateness, a spontaneity of individual conduct, very far back in the Life series. Recent observation of the movements of those microscopic animated

jellies which are termed *amœbæ* has shown that these primitive creatures are no mere automata. They exhibit, in their pursuit of one another, a power of selection and of the adaptation of means to ends in view of changing circumstances, which it is hard not to describe as conduct. And this spontaneity of action can be traced from this lowly beginning up through the long history of developing life until we reach its highest point in the will of man. Feeling, thought and will, the elements of our psychic life, blended in the unity of our conscious existence, have come to themselves as the result of a long history which began when first sentient life made its appearance.

This consideration is of the utmost importance for our present purpose, because it shows that pain and sin, the two forms of evil, spring from the same root. In order to feel the attraction of aims corresponding to the circumstances of its life, the living creature had to acquire sensitiveness, some degree of awareness, some inward urge depending upon feeling. Out of this state sprang all that we call mind and will. Pleasure and pain, desire and satisfaction, hope and attainment, fear and disappointment, are all involved. These elements, beginning in the crude impulses of lower beings, find their full realization in man's life. And as they emerge they bring to light, first the tremendous fact of suffering aware of itself, and then the distinction between good and evil.

Linked thus in their origin, these two elements, suffering and evil, interact in their history. The emergence of the distinction between good and evil puts man upon his trial as a moral being, and the

essential quality of moral discipline is the enduring of suffering in order to do the good, or to overcome the evil. Through the conflict which thus arises the moral life of humanity is created. Here also is the sphere of the great problem of Atonement which fills so large a place in the religious experience of mankind.

While all this is true, it is a mistake to darken too much the shadows. Life in itself is happy. Every living thing attains the bliss of at least one adventure. Most of the pains of animal life are short : most deaths are painless. It is the sentimentalist, not the man of science, who thinks of the age-long struggle as an age-long agony. To man, it is true, suffering brings a keener sorrow, for he looks before and after. But that is the cost of his higher calling, the mark of his greatness.

It is in choosing the good and rejecting the evil that the will finds its highest exercise ; and the conditions which enable this choice to be made involve as their very essentials the sentient life of pleasure and pain, and the moral elements of good and evil. The actuality of pain and the possibility of evil form the school of discipline in which man is made.

Christianity adds the affirmation that God has not left man to struggle alone, but has entered human life in order to enable him to overcome, enduring the pain, with him and for him, and giving power for the conquest of evil.

(3) A third difficulty, arising from the advance of scientific thought, is characteristic of the present age. It is the conception of Evolution as applied to creation. But theistic thought has really come to terms with this conception. Evolution is continuous creation.

" My Father," said Christ, as reported by the fourth Evangelist, " My Father worketh even until now and I work." Regarding the scientific history of the world in the light of these words, we discern a vast creative process marked by stages which may be indicated by the following series: the material system of the universe; the shaping of the globe, and the long course of changes by which it was brought to such conditions of temperature, drought and moisture, as fitted it for habitation; the coming of life; the vegetable and animal series with their infinite variety of forms; the emergence of man; the upward movement of human life; the formation of human society, the family, the tribe, the city, the State; the convergence of various types of civilization towards the epoch of the Christian era; the unification of human life by scientific agency in modern times. Though many questions may be raised, it would seem more reasonable to regard this wonderful series as marking out the fulfilment of a universal purpose than as the result of accidental collocations in one corner of the Universe, the effect of blind mechanical forces working out their necessary end.

We have thus been able to approach the idea of a supreme intelligent and moral Principle from two different directions: we have found God within, and we have seen reason to believe in God the Creator, God without. But can we identify the " God within " with the " God without " ? Is " Our Father " whom we know in Christian prayer the same as the " Maker of Heaven and Earth " whom we confess in the ancient Creed ?

There are undoubtedly influences of the present

time which tend to set these two apart. There are thinkers who seem to recognize the " God within " as a true Divine King of the human race, but who regard the " Great First Cause," if the old language may be used, as an inscrutable mystery.

This problem demands consideration, however brief. First, let it be observed that the " God within," while manifested in a personal relationship, which is expressed by the words Father and Child, differs from a human person in this respect that He is always presented by an inner experience which has no parallel, as regards intimacy, in human fellowship, no matter how close. The soul at prayer always feels that God knows him through and through, discerning the secrets of the inner being, even the most hidden. To Him all hearts are open. It is clear that, if this conviction stands for a truth, the Personality of God must be on a plane of being higher than ours. He is certainly in the fullest sense personal, for He knows and wills, we can trust Him and love Him. He is Spiritual in the highest degree: He is the Father of Spirits. Yet we realize that, in Him, knowledge, will, and spiritual powers of every kind pass beyond any faculties that we possess, in their grasp, and even in the nature of their relationship to other spirits. Such is definitely and unmistakably the interpretation which we must put on the Christian experience.

Let us now consider the " God without." To some of the most penetrating minds of the present day, it is vain to seek for personality in the power or powers which operate in the forces of the vast physical universe. We have already dealt with this question so far as to make it appear that the mechanism of the

physical order is not inconsistent with the existence of a Universal Mind, and that the order of development in the history of the world points to an overruling purpose. Also we have seen that the modern view of the life-history of animate Nature, culminating in man, finds a very splendid interpretation in the Christian ideas of Incarnation and Atonement. But there is more to be said. If the Universe were nothing but a vast mechanical system, we might attain to the conception of One Supreme Universal Mind and Will, One Divine Person, as the source and ultimate explanation of it; for mechanism in human experience is the means adopted by mind in order to carry out purpose in the physical sphere. But, as we have seen, the Universe is not solely mechanical: it includes also an innumerable multitude of creatures possessed of an inner faculty of self-direction, a principle which culminates in the mind and will of man.

If, then, there be a supreme Spiritual Being who is realizing a universal purpose in the age-long process of Creation, He must include within the Sphere of His activity the multitude of living beings and of limited personalities which, together with merely material Nature, form the Universe so far as we know it. Though not depriving these limited personalities of their inherent powers of initiative and of subordinate self-determination, He must be to them an overruling and encircling Life. "In Him we live and move and have our being."

Thus by another path, by following the direction indicated by the conditions of the world without, we reach a conclusion which corresponds remarkably

with that to which our inner experience leads us. God is Personal in the highest degree, but, in Him, personality is taken up into a Unity which, from the nature of our approach to it, must be on a level of Reality higher than any known in our experience. Only one form of being known to us can point to its nature, or express its quality: Love. For love can overcome the oppositions of diverse wills and at the same time realize their best potentialities. Here is the truth which the Christian doctrine of the Trinity has endeavoured to express. Here also may be discerned the depth of meaning in that fullest, though briefest, expression of Christian Faith: God is Love.[1]

[1] The conception briefly expressed above is worked out more fully in the writer's *God and Freedom in Human Experience*, especially in Chaps. IV and IX; also in his *Idealism and Theology*.

V

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

By W. R. Matthews, D.D.,
Dean of King's College, London

THE question, What think ye of Christ? is one which has presented itself to every age since the first century of our era. It is a question which presents itself with urgent force to us. On the answer which we give to it depends our judgment of the future of the world and of its spiritual destiny. The answer of the Church and of Christian experience as a whole is not doubtful. It is that Christ is the completely adequate revelation of the nature of God, Himself one with God, the response of the Eternal to the world's need, worthy of the uttermost service and adoration, the rightful Lord of the Universe. If we accept this view we shall be committed to the conclusion that the Christian religion is the final stage in the spiritual progress of man, that no further development of knowledge or insight will take us beyond Christ. We need not indeed hold that any extant form of Christianity is the definitive and unimprovable expression of our religion. Probably it may seem more reasonable to us to believe that there is yet more light and truth to be apprehended and that progress is still possible, but we shall be

convinced that our progress will be towards a more adequate comprehension of the meaning of Christ, not away from Him. On the other hand, we may see in Christ only one of the spiritual leaders of mankind, one whose truth was mingled with error and who spoke with power only to some generations of men, one to be superseded like other teachers. In that case we shall naturally regard Christianity as but a passing phase in the intellectual and moral history of mankind, and shall look forward to the emergence of a religion, or at least a view of the world and of life, more rational and more satisfying than the religion whose centre is Jesus.

It is a responsible task to add anything to this momentous controversy, and in particular when the limitations of space preclude the adequate discussion even of one aspect. The aim of the present essay cannot be to marshal all the evidence on which the Church's faith rests or to discuss all the problems which arise in the modern mind concerning it, but rather to indicate what to the present writer seem the salient questions and to suggest perhaps a line of thought, fully in harmony with modern knowledge, which may lead to the conclusion that what Christian faith has found in Christ can be found still, without disloyalty to the new revelation of scientific, historical and philosophical truth which we possess. Professor Whitehead has recently remarked that too often the establishment of a new truth is hailed not only as a victory for science but as a defeat for religion. It must be a religion doomed to extinction of which this can be said, and it is at least the conviction of the present writer that the advance of thought

is making the apprehension of God in Christ easier and not harder.

The problems which we have to consider fall into two groups: first, those which concern history and centre round the consciousness of Jesus and the impression which He made upon His disciples; and secondly, the more fundamental problems which arise from our changed conception of the structure of the Universe.

I

All the knowledge which we possess of the life and words of Jesus is contained in the New Testament, that is to say in documents which were composed by men who believed Him to be Christ and Lord. Nor can we claim that these sources were written with a narrowly historical motive They were instruments of Christian propaganda and instruction whose purpose was to lead others to share the belief of the Church. There is little doubt that the "dogmatic" point of view has, to some extent, coloured the records, as can be proved by a comparison of St. Mark with the other Synoptic Gospels. The contention of some scholars that we can know nothing of the original utterances of Jesus is, however, an absurdly sceptical theory which would make the subsequent development of Christianity unintelligible. We cannot, therefore, accept the idea that Jesus was a moral teacher whose doctrine has been so thickly overlaid by Messianic categories that nothing certain can be known of Him. We may ask the question, What view did Jesus Himself hold of His nature and mission?

The inquiry into the self-consciousness of Jesus has not unnaturally seemed both irreverent and impossible to many Christian writers, and we must confess at the outset that we are here specially liable to the " psychologist's fallacy " of reading our own experience and thoughts into the mind of others. Many " lives " of Christ have been chiefly remarkable as examples of this fallacy. But it would be a strange paradox to maintain that what we should think of Jesus has no connection with what He thought of Himself, and in fact there is sufficient evidence in the Gospels for forming an adequate conception on this subject.

Older writers on Apologetics were accustomed to speak of the " claims " of Jesus. Most readers of the Gospels will agree with Dr. Cave and Dr. Garvie[1] that the expression is unfortunate, since it gives a misleading impression of the public ministry of our Lord. Nothing could be further from the truth than to think of Him as making overt proclamation of His Messianic dignity and His supernatural mission. It may be regarded as certain that He made no public announcement of His Messiahship until He met the challenge of the High Priest with an explicit statement—and that statement was the immediate cause of His death. Nor can we believe that He put forward any definite " claims " even in the circle of the disciples. The confession of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi, Thou art the Christ, was a discovery not an assent to a truth already stated. The method of Jesus was not to startle and subdue men's minds

[1] See *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, by S. Cave, and *The Christian Doctrine of the Godhead*, by A. E. Garvie.

by the wonder of His assertions about Himself but to lead them, through knowledge of His character, to ask whether this was not the Hope of Israel.

But there can equally be little doubt that Jesus, probably from the beginning of His ministry, associated Himself, His teaching, His mission, and His Person, with the supreme event in the history of the world and the culminating intervention of God in human affairs. He came preaching the Kingdom of God, and He preached it in a twofold manner. The Kingdom is coming; prepare for it: the Kingdom is here; receive it. Much learned discussion has taken place on the meaning of the "Kingdom" in the Gospels, and several questions remain to be decided; but one secure result seems to have emerged. So-called "Liberal Protestants" have interpreted the Kingdom in terms of our modern conceptions of humanitarianism and progress. They have thought of Jesus as a leader in the "relief of man's estate" through human effort, or even as the herald of an earthly Utopia. Doubtless much of this connection of the Kingdom with social idealism has been healthy and legitimate, but it has tended to obscure the essential nature of the Kingdom as taught by Jesus. We cannot indeed assume that He adopted the Apocalyptic conceptions of God's coming reign in their entirety, nor indeed is it possible to construct a consistent doctrine from the Apocalyptic writings themselves, but the fundamental thought in them all was the fundamental thought of Jesus. The Kingdom is the Act and Gift of God, not something to be wrought out by human agency, but something to be accepted "like little children." Thus we see that Jesus from

the outset connected Himself with the supreme event in history, with an event which is indeed more than historical, since it is the culmination and the explanation of all history.

We may go further. Jesus regarded Himself as the central figure in this central event. We have not sufficient data to trace the growth of the Messianic consciousness, if growth there were, but only the most prejudiced criticism can doubt that He thought of Himself as Messiah, as the Son of Man, that superhuman and yet human being, who in Daniel and other apocalyptic writings is spoken of as inaugurating God's final reign. The Messianic consciousness gives us the clue to the reason of His passion. By what appears to have been an entirely original thought, Jesus connected the Suffering Servant of the second Isaiah with the Messiah and took the woes which had been foretold as preluding the Messianic Age upon Himself. He was crucified because He admitted that He was the Christ, the Son of the Blessed; He accepted the cross because He believed it.

We have not yet exhausted the evidence concerning the consciousness of Jesus, though space forbids us to do more than refer to the important points which remain. The conclusion which we have reached is confirmed and amplified by other features of our Lord's teaching. The manner of His moral and spiritual preaching is consonant with the conception of Himself as "the spiritual ruler of mankind." [1] "He spake with authority." Who is this who revises, and in part rescinds, the Mosaic Law with

[1] Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 369.

the formula, "I say unto you"? Surely one who knows Himself to be greater than Moses. There is further to be considered, before we can have the data fully before us, the apparently unbroken "filial consciousness," the undisturbed communion with God, unruffled by any evidence of the sense of sin.

We have said enough perhaps to show that the attempt to envisage Jesus as a mere teacher of righteousness makes nonsense of the records. In His own consciousness He was the culmination of the religious history of the Hebrews, the centre of God's final self-manifestation, of right the Leader and the Lord of the New Age. An ancient argument for the Christian faith is summed up in the phrase *aut Deus aut non bonus*. We have come to see that there is a third possibility. Few to-day would be prepared to hold that Jesus was a conscious deceiver who pretended to a dignity which He knew to be false, but many to-day would regard Him as the victim of illusion. Mr. H. G. Wells has recently published a novel which has a theological intention strangely overlooked by most reviewers. In *Christina Alberta's Father* we are given a masterly sketch of the growth and consequences of an illusion in the hero's mind that he is really Sargon King of Kings, and it is suggested that such a fixed idea may exist in a mind which is otherwise sane and along with a character which is gentle and humane. We need not deny the possibility of such eccentric persons as Christina Alberta's father, though a doubt may be permitted whether insanity so nicely limited exists outside the pages of novels with a purpose. We need not deny again that the consciousness of Jesus with

regard to Himself and His mission was coloured by the forms of religious thought and expectation of His time, which were different in many respects from ours. Christian faith has no interest in disputing that Jesus was historically "a Jew of the First Century."

The question which the personality of Jesus presents to us remains unaffected by these considerations. It is whether the conception which the Gospels lead us to believe that Jesus had of His own unique mission as the supreme and final revealer of God was justified or not. If we have adopted the view that there is no God to be revealed, or that, if there is a God, He cannot be revealed through human personality, we shall perforce, driven by our presuppositions, hold either that He never formed such conceptions of Himself and that the Messianic consciousness was the invention of a generation which misunderstood Him, or that Jesus suffered from a strange form of megalomania. Neither of these hypotheses can be said to be inherently attractive. The first, as we have seen, is in flat contradiction to the historical evidence, while the second carries us into regions of psychological improbability the degree of which must be estimated by each man for himself. If, however, we approach the facts with other presuppositions, believing that God exists and is personal and that He reveals Himself to and through men, we shall find no inherent improbability in the estimation which the Gospel records plainly ascribe to Jesus of His own significance. Let us avoid at least the childish error of supposing that we can approach the evidence with no presuppositions at all. Our

estimate will be largely determined by our view of the world and of the truth of Theism. To have no presuppositions in reading the Gospels is itself a presupposition.

Had the life and consciousness of Jesus appeared only for a moment and then vanished, leaving no effects behind, we might be content to regard them as an aberration of the religious spirit. But "His sound has gone forth into all lands and His words unto the ends of the world." In the New Testament, outside the Gospels, we have the record of that creative experience which is the germ of the Christian religion, and the beginning of that continuous Christian experience which is the standing evidence for the significance of Christ. Theologians have often spoiled the impressiveness of the New Testament witness by seeking in it a logically consistent doctrine of Christ's Person which cannot in fact be found. There is a consistency, but it is one of attitude and of experience rather than that of formal intellectual coherence. In that fact lies the real weight of the Apostolic testimony. We may strive in vain to construct a theology by putting together the utterances of the New Testament writers. They use different categories and speak different languages. But they are all trying to say the same thing. They give the impression of men searching about among the available ideas and images for terms adequate to express the inexpressible—what Christ has come to mean to them. In a sense we may truly speak of a development of Christological doctrine in the Apostolic Age. The teaching of St. Paul and of St. John is vastly more profound than that of the early speeches

in the Acts which may probably represent the most primitive form of evangelical preaching. But this greater profundity is the result of a more conscious grappling with the intellectual problems, not of a different spiritual attitude to Christ. The risen Christ whom St. Peter and St. Stephen proclaim and trust is Lord, not in any sense associated with Greek mystery religions, but in the austere and exclusive sense of Jewish Monotheists, He sits on the right hand of God.

If we are right in believing that the speeches in Acts represent the most primitive form of teaching about Christ, we have a good reason for rejecting the theory, so industriously propagated, that St. Paul is responsible for changing the faith of the Church into a Christocentric cultus and mysticism. But there are other reasons. St. Paul himself never hints that his Gospel is new; on the contrary, he anxiously maintains that it is the common message of the Church. He was not without enemies who would have seized upon the accusation of innovating had there been any ground for it. There is no faintest echo of any opposition to his teaching on the Person of Christ. Against that form of the theory which suggests that St. Paul derived the Gospel which he preached from pagan myths and mystery cults we may set the general psychological observation well expressed by Dr. Cave: "It seems quite unlikely that Paul did what no missionary we know of has done: he gave his life for a message which derived, not its form only, but its content, from the peoples among whom he worked. Those who so argue know neither the cost nor the meaning of

missionary service."[1] For St. Paul Christ is the divine Agent of human redemption, He is the centre of the religious life of the individual; to be "in Christ" is the highest spiritual condition; He is the originator of a new race, the second Adam in whom all shall be made alive. Nor does the Apostle stop short with the influence of Christ in human experience. Unequivocally he connects the Lord with the cosmic activity of God. He is the likeness of the unseen God, the first-born of creation, through whom all things were created. He pre-exists creation, being "in the form of God" but, counting equality with God not "a thing to be grasped at," humbled Himself to the death of the cross. It would perhaps be difficult to deduce from the words of St. Paul a consistent theology, but there can be no doubt that in his Gospel the figure of Christ is both central and divine.

Doubtless it would be absurd to think of St. Paul as a typical Christian of the first generation, but at least it may be said that the typical Christian found nothing strange in the Apostle's estimate of the significance of Jesus. The Pauline Christology is, however, not the only one in the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Johannine writings we have the work of minds of a different order. Probably both the author of Hebrews and the author of the Fourth Gospel were acquainted with St. Paul's teaching, but they were not imitators or mere reproducers of his thought. They think in different ways; the former with the visualizing imaging of the poet, the latter as a mystical philosopher.

[1] S. Cave, *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, p. 51.

Their presentations of the doctrine of the Person of Christ differ from that of St. Paul ; but their attitude to Christ, the spiritual experience which they are trying to express and communicate, is essentially the same. These great apostolic documents of our religion are not, we are compelled to believe, the sudden and unprepared productions of men of "religious genius" who imposed their new conceptions on a community to which they were strange, but they come, as the Acts would tell us, out of a brotherhood whose religious life was already centred on Jesus, not as innovations but as explanations.

A certain kind of critic has expended much ingenuity on explaining how a Jesus of Nazareth who simply taught men to believe in the Fatherhood of God and was crucified, came so quickly to be deified. The problem may well be insoluble, because it is wholly factitious. There never was a Jesus of Nazareth who simply taught men to believe in the Fatherhood of God ; and the Christ in whom the first generation of Christians found redemption and whom they exalted as worthy of the utmost worship was not Jesus crucified but one "defined" as the Son of God by the resurrection. For the apostolic believers the Incarnation was an act of God for man's redemption, and the act was the whole life of the Son, not His teaching only but above all His death and conquering of death.

It is sufficiently evident that, though the New Testament leaves us in no doubt concerning the religious and spiritual value which the creative period of Christian experience found in Jesus, it leaves unsolved several important intellectual problems. Two

in particular force themselves upon our notice even as we read St. Paul and St. John. Christ is for them most certainly a divine Being to be worshipped without idolatry; but the question of the relation of the Christ to the Father, of the reconciliation of Christ-worship with Monotheism, is not definitely discussed. Again, the Person of Christ is presented to us as one quite definitely human, with the passions, feelings, limitations of human life, and not less definitely as divine. The relation of these two elements in the one personality of Christ is not the subject of apostolic speculation. When the Christian faith became as a whole the object of reflection it was inevitable that these two problems should be raised.

The Christological controversies and the dogmatic decisions of the first six Christian centuries are the debate upon these questions. It would take us far beyond our present limits to trace these controversies or to discuss in detail the worth of the formulas which sum up the "orthodox" position. Some remarks must, however, be made upon them in order to lead up to the next division of this essay. We ought, in the first place, to distinguish between the religious value and the philosophical intelligibility of the Catholic doctrine of the Person of Christ. On the whole it is true to say that the statements of the Councils were put forward with the primary intention of guarding the religious life of the Church against the deterioration which would have resulted from the success of some answers to the intellectual problems presented by the Incarnation. In the Arian controversy Christianity was saved from be-

coming the worship of a demi-god; in the decision against Apollinarianism it was secured in its possession of a Christ who was really able to save mankind because Himself truly man. No one has stated this *defensive* motive more clearly than Dr. Gore: "The only true and historical way of regarding these dogmatic decisions is to regard them as primarily *negative*. Their motive was not any positively felt need of interpreting or defining the faith as a thing good in itself, but simply the pressing necessity for excluding certain very powerfully supported intellectual theories which were at work and which were calculated to undermine the traditions of faith, worship and practice which the Church was set to maintain —what it called the tradition." [1] Further, even though it might be shown that the Christological dogmas are not to us finally intelligible and that a more adequate presentation which would conserve the religious values was possible, it would not follow that the Catholic creeds should be rejected or revised. An imperfect philosophy may be more readily intelligible to the unlearned than one which is intellectually more coherent. And moreover, in the view of the present writer, the function of religious doctrines is not, in the first place, to serve as philosophical statements, but to carry on the spiritual experience and to reawaken in every generation the religious attitude which was the essence of the original revelation. It may be that a gain in intelligibility would be dearly purchased by the loss of the "numinous" character which inheres in phrases so long consecrated by Christian piety.

[1] *Belief in Christ*, p. 218.

The late Father Tyrrell, in the course of his polemic against the identification of scholastic Theology with the Catholic faith, proclaimed, "There is no revealed logic." We may perhaps extend the application of the aphorism and add, "There is no revealed philosophy." The Church, when confronted with the necessity of defining its belief about Christ in contradistinction to error, perforce made use of philosophical terms and conceptions which were current. There was no other way. But it would be a grievous error to identify the categories through which the religious values were preserved with the faith which sought expression through them. And it must be confessed that the philosophy which was available was singularly unfitted for the purpose of giving intellectual form to Christian faith. The Gospel of God in Christ is the message of supreme revelation through a Person; but the thought of the Greek world was defective in its view of personality and did not even possess a recognized term for the concept. The word ὑπόστασις, which is translated "person" in the creeds, certainly does not mean what we mean by person, though it would be difficult to say precisely what it does mean. Originally, before its adaptation to the needs of Christological definition, it was equivalent to "substance." The philosophical outlook was also embarrassed by an unresolved dualism. The "gulf" between the universal and the particular which Plato had bequeathed as a problem still haunted reflection and breaks out in the Christological dogma as an utter difference and separation between the human and the divine. Here is the real crux of the ancient theology. The problem as it was presented

was really insoluble. Given two entities, which are in their essence different, it is impossible to bring them together into a real unity. Thus, though the ancient Christology affirmed in words, and really wished to maintain, the unity of the Person of Christ, the doctrine of the two natures united, "unmixed, unchanged, undivided, not to be separated," really issued, if thought out, in the conception of a being who was not a unitary personality at all. When we read that Jesus did this "as man" and that "as God," we are conscious that the definition has taken us far away from the Figure of the Gospels and from any possible psychology. The real failure of the Christology of the ancient Church as an intellectually coherent doctrine comes to light in the last great controversy of the Christological discussion—the question whether there are two wills or one in the Incarnate Logos.

It is customary among theologians to pass swiftly over this phase of the doctrinal development and to regard it as an example of the excessive subtlety of the Greek theological mind. No doubt it is true that in the discussion dialectical self-confidence played a great part, and possibly no vital interest of religion turned upon its decision. From the logical point of view, however, the question was inevitable, and from the standpoint which had been adopted the question appears insoluble. Given that there are two natures, utterly distinct and disparate, united without fusion in Christ, we cannot help asking whether "nature" includes will. Either possible answer seems to lead to intolerable conclusions. If we say there is one will, and that divine, we have plainly denied the

reality of the Lord's human experience and undermined the Gospel of Redemption and the possibility of thinking of Jesus as our Example. If, on the other hand, we say that there are two wills, human and divine, we must hold that the two wills always will the same object, otherwise we shall have been led to a plain denial of the unity of the Person of Christ. It is not too much to say surely that the conception of two wills in one Personality which always have the same content is unintelligible. To think this out would involve us in the thought of " bare " will, a will existing prior to anything willed.[1]

Enough has been said to indicate that the presuppositions of both " orthodox " and " heretical " theologians in the early centuries precluded them from formulating a doctrine of the Person of Christ which was at once in harmony with the facts of the New Testament and Christian experience and also philosophically intelligible The root of the difficulty was the dualistic conception of the divine and human natures. What is utterly separate cannot be brought together. Dr. H. M. Relton, who has produced in his *Study in Christology* perhaps the most understanding defence of the " orthodox " Christology, has with good reason attempted to grapple with this fundamental difficulty in his interesting revival and expansion of the thought that there is an eternal humanity in the Logos before the Incarnation. Before we leave this subject

[1] Dr. Temple in *Christus Veritas* seems to adopt a suggestion of Mr. Grensted that a distinction can be drawn between will and *ἐνέργεια* and that we should recognize two *ἐνέργειαι* in Christ. I would gladly have considered this if I had been able to understand it. We may hope that either Dr. Temple or Mr. Grensted will deal with this point at greater length.

we must, however, briefly refer to another legacy of Greek speculation which hampered Christian thinkers in their formulation of the message of the Gospel. It was assumed that the divine nature was incapable of suffering, and therefore that only the human nature in Christ suffered for us. Dr. Garvie is surely justified in his remark that " this is a survival of Greek philosophy which hindered an understanding of the Gospel story." [1]

Philosophies and views of the world change, and we may hope that greater knowledge brings deeper insight into the ultimate nature of things. Religious values do not change with the alteration in the manner of our thought. Faith finds in Jesus what it has found from the beginning. But the mode in which that experience is rationalized must be modified by the change in the intellectual " climate." The fathers of the Early Church did what was possible with the categories which were available, and we shall not deny that the Spirit of God guided the Church in its long struggle to preserve intact the treasure which was committed to it. Always perhaps the truth of God must be contained in " earthen vessels " which distort as well as conserve. We shall not hope to remove all mystery from the Incarnation or conceal the fact that in every inquiry there comes a point where the mind must lose itself in an " O altitudo ! " But at least we may hope to express it in terms more intelligible to ourselves; to pour, as

[1] *The Christian Doctrine of the Godhead*, p. 183. I should like to express my indebtedness to the whole of Dr. Garvie's book, and particularly to the discussion of the doctrine of the Person of Christ in Chap. IV.

it were, the new wine into vessels from which the modern man may more easily drink.

II

The difficulties which we have just reviewed have arisen, as we have seen, from the application of an imperfect metaphysic to the interpretation of the significance of Christ. It is easy to understand the motives which have led some modern theologians of the Ritschlian school to demand the expulsion of metaphysics from religion and to proclaim a divorce between philosophy and theology. The watchwords of this movement are, We know nothing of God except through Jesus, and, Jesus has for me the value of God. In other words, the attempt is made to distinguish between "judgments of existence" and judgments of value and to assign all the affirmations on which the Christian life is based to the latter class. A profound and important truth lies behind this view. It is indeed necessary that we should refrain from identifying the Christian faith with any of the systems of metaphysics which pass like driving clouds across the intellectual heavens. Our faith in Christ is founded upon experience, and our primary creed, Jesus is Lord, means that we find in Him the Leader in that Way of Life which we see to be the highest; that we take His values for ours and His attitude towards life's problems as our own. Any Christology which does not begin with something in the nature of a value-judgment is not Christian. The depressing effect which the study of much of the classical Christological controversies leaves upon our minds is due to the feeling that the discussion is about

Incarnation in the abstract with little reference to the historical Jesus of Nazareth. But the Christian Gospel is not that there has been an Incarnation but that we may see God "in the face of Jesus Christ."

Nevertheless, we cannot remain satisfied with a mere value-judgment or cut off our religion from the question, What kind of world is it in which we live? The absolute separation between value-judgments and judgments of existence cannot be maintained, nor can we be content to think of Jesus as the revealer of the highest kind of life, leaving on one side the question whether He is also the revealer of the nature of the ultimate reality of the Universe. Again, expressions such as "We know nothing of God apart from Jesus," though capable of an explanation which would render them innocuous, are thoroughly misleading, for they suggest that there are no grounds for belief in God apart from the Christian revelation, and seem to deny all value to the religious experience of humanity outside the Christian pale. Catholic theology has been right in beginning with the *preambula fidei*, the reasons for belief in God and the truths which may be known concerning Him apart from the special revelation in Christ. We can hope to interpret the Person of Christ only in a theistic setting.

Modern Theism bears a different complexion from that of the ancient world and has been greatly modified by the progress of philosophical reflection in general and by the advance of science in particular. It is not within the province of this essay to consider the general problems of Theism, but we cannot avoid some consideration of the relation of God to the world

in the light of modern knowledge. Perhaps the most drastic change which has taken place in our conception of the world is that we have been led to think of it as a continuous process. The evolutionary standpoint has become native to our minds. Some versions of evolution, of course, are wholly antagonistic not only to Theism but to any spiritual view of life. The type of evolutionary theory which would resolve all the higher types of existence into complex arrangements of the lower and regard the process itself as purely mechanical is the logical antithesis of belief in God and the solvent of all moral aspiration. This materialistic evolution has long been exploded as a serious philosophical theory and will not be discussed here. A recent development of evolutionary thought is the theory of " emergent evolution " expounded in somewhat different forms by Professor S. Alexander and Professor Lloyd Morgan.[1] According to this view, there is a tendency, a " nisus " in Alexander's phrase, in the universe to produce new and higher types of being. It is true that the exponents of this theory wish to distinguish between " emergent " evolution and the teleological or purposive view ; but a little reflection is sufficient to show that this distinction cannot be maintained. " Emergent " evolution is really a doctrine of immanent teleology. Theories such as Alexander's and Bergson's could provide a basis for a kind of doctrine of the Person of Christ. Thus Alexander would have us assign the quality of " deity " to the next stage in emergent evolution, that type of being which is not yet fully born. The

[1] See *Space, Time and Deity*, by the former, and *Emergent Evolution* and *Life, Mind and Spirit*, by the latter.

Christian might perhaps be permitted to see in Jesus the first emergence of a new level of existence, and one which was destined to prevail. Within Alexander's scheme, however, it would be impossible to develop a doctrine of Christ which would preserve intact the Christian Gospel, for it is an essential element in his theory that the process is unending and no existence can ever claim to be the final manifestation of Deity. The progress of critical reflection will, it may confidently be asserted, demonstrate that a merely immanent teleology is, in the end, unintelligible and will demonstrate the hopelessness of explaining the evolutionary process from within itself. It is a noteworthy indication of this fact that Professor Lloyd Morgan concludes his second volume, *Life, Mind and Spirit*, with the sketch of a Theism which includes transcendence.[1]

Nevertheless, we have to state our doctrine of the Incarnation so that it may be in harmony with an evolutionary view of the world-process. We cannot attempt to deny that Jesus appears within the continuous biological and historical development, nor that His life is conditioned by the position which He has within it. A general objection to the possibility of an Incarnation within an evolutionary process must perhaps be briefly noticed. It is said that development and finality are contradictory. If there is assumed to be an indefinite progression; we can never say that, within that progression, there has happened an event which cannot be repeated or has

[1] For a discussion of the subjects touched on in this paragraph I may perhaps refer the reader to my Liverpool Lectures *God and Evolution* (Longmans).

emerged a value which cannot be surpassed. We may still look for another in the course of time who will supersede Christ. Doubtless on some views of evolution this conclusion would follow; but not on any view which would justify our intellectual and æsthetic activities. When we are considering beauty or truth we assume that finality is possible. Dante is, from one point of view, a product of evolution, in a sense he can be "explained" on evolutionary lines. The forms of his thought and the images on which his imagination fed are derived from the circumstances of his life. It is conceivable that a greater poet may arise; but it is not conceivable that there will be another Dante or that some one will produce another and better *Divine Comedy*. In the same way, the existence of philosophy depends on the assumption that some finality is possible in the sphere of truth. Professor Alexander is, presumably, a product of emergent evolution, but he presents his philosophy to us as an outline of the structure of the universe which claims ultimate truth. Unless he does so he is wasting his time and ours. Thus in art and thought finality must be supposed to be somehow compatible with evolution. There can therefore be no ground for rejecting as impossible the belief that the final, normative and decisive religious experience has appeared in history.

It is evident that our modern conception of the process of evolution as, in some sense, creative naturally leads to a different emphasis in our thought of the relation of the divine Life to the created order. We may indeed assert that the tendency of modern thought is strongly in favour of the belief in divine

immanence, and it is certain that no form of Theism can hope to commend itself to-day which does not begin with the thought of the energy of God in the world. The problem for the ancient world was to understand how the transcendent God could manifest Himself within the finite order: the problem for us to understand how the divine Life immanent in the finite can also be transcendent. Clearly then our doctrine of creation must avoid two ideas which have often been associated with it. We cannot think of creation as having taken place once for all and then having been left to itself under the general and external superintendence of Providence; nor can we think of God as being wholly distinct and separate from His creation. On the contrary, we must envisage creation as a continuous process and hold that God is not absent from any part of His creation. "He is not far from any one of us. In Him we live and move and have our being." No part of the Scholastic Theology has more manifestly contradicted Christ's conception of God than that which deals with God and creation. In the interest of an abstract conception of Deity as self-sufficient it has been maintained that creation is in no sense necessary to God and cannot in any degree add to His perfection, so that it would seem that the joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth must be unreal. We have no data for the inquiry into the nature of God as He is in Himself, and perhaps the question is unmeaning. We know God only in His "mighty acts." To the present writer at least it is evident that it is of the nature of God to create.[1] But this creative process, regarded as a

[1] Cf. *Studies in Christian Philosophy*, pp. 192 ff.

whole, cannot be temporal, since it includes the whole series of temporal creative acts. Can we characterize the nature of this eternal creative act? We may at least say two things about it. The going forth of the divine Life in creation must, in some sense, be a self-limitation. It involves the determination of being in finite forms. But at the same time, if we are right in believing that God is in His nature creative, we must believe also that creation is the self-expression and self-fulfilment of God. It is probably well to restrict the meaning of the term Incarnation to the complete fulfilment in Christ, but there is a truth in the statement that all creation is an Incarnation. Nothing could maintain itself in being for a moment but for the sustaining life of God which, however imperfectly, finds expression in it.

When once we have attained this standpoint we are in possession of a clue to the meaning of the world-process. We can see it as the history of the growing victory of the divine Life—the upward movement of the *λόγος προφορικός*. As we trace the rising scale of being and observe the emergence of new values we are aware of the goal towards which the process tends. There are doubtless problems which are beyond any final solution. We cannot give any satisfactory answer to the question why there should be any process at all, nor can we account for the fact that the divine self-expression should, in all its stages, be conditioned by the need to overcome negation. Nevertheless, we are compelled by the facts to recognize these elements as constituting the divine Life in the world. At every level the victory of the immanent divine consists in the transcendence of

negativity. Life rears itself out of matter and uses it; the continuance of life is a continuous overcoming of death. Thought stands upon habit and instinct, existing through them but only in so far as they are subordinated and transcended. And the rise in the level of the finite beings who are the centres and agents of these activities is characterized by the inclusion of an ever more diverse plurality within an ever more rich and definite unity. In so far as we can describe the concrete immanent life of God in abstract general terms it is the creation of new values by the overcoming of negativity and the achievement of more complex unity.

Even when we remain within the process of evolution and do not rise above the immanent conception of God we can see good reason to believe that in human personality we begin to catch sight of something in the nature of a culmination or end. In personality the movement which we have just described reaches its greatest triumph; in personality the highest type of unity through plurality is exhibited, and the most definite and diverse transcendence of negativity. Moreover, it must be added that it is only with the entrance of personality upon the scene that we can begin to speak of values in any strict sense, for all values if not created by persons, exist, so far as we know, only for them. If, now, we go further and interpret the development of the finite order in the light of Ethical Monotheism, we are able to give a much fuller account of the purpose of the creative process and the nature of its goal. The divine motive in creation contains, if we may so speak, two elements which are complementary of one

another. God seeks the expression of His own being, and He seeks, as an essential part of that expression, the development of free spirits, completed personalities, who may be in conscious and unbroken fellowship with Himself. These are not two aims but one and the same. The Eternal Personality is not fully manifested until, within time and space, there has appeared a Person who is its own image.

It is often said that " for the static conception of natures we must substitute the dynamic conception of personality." [1] The remark is profoundly true, and a brief reflection upon it will possibly indicate how the standpoint of modern thought enables us to avoid some of the insoluble antinomies of the older Christology. The idea of " substance " has had a long and honourable history, but its story is almost at an end. In every department of knowledge it is being rejected as unintelligible and inadequate and its place is being taken by the conception of activity. Bishop Berkeley demonstrated on philosophical grounds the fallacy of the idea of material substance, without any immediate effect on the procedure of science ; but the progress of physics has itself led to the relegation of substance to the sphere of mythology and the substitution of the concept of a coherent series of changes or events. " Dynamic " conceptions are taking the place of " static." Precisely the same transformation is happening in our conception of mind and personality. Thought has long worked with the concept of a " thinking substance " as opposed to a material substance, and even when the phrase itself has been discarded has kept the notion of the

[1] Garvie, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

mind as that which thinks, of a soul which might have some existence apart from spiritual activity.

Space precludes any elaboration of this statement with reference to the recent developments of psychology. Here we must be content to state dogmatically that the methods of analytical and empirical psychology are incompetent to unravel the deep mystery of the self.[1] In the last resort we are always brought to the recognition of a creative centre, a transcendental ego, which can in its nature never be the object of scientific inquiry but only the subject of metaphysical intuition. Giovanni Gentile in his remarkable book, the *Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, has lifted the philosophy of personality to a new stage. He has transcended the last vestiges of the old doctrine of thinking substance and shown us how we may conceive, behind the empirical ego of our commonplace and fluctuating opinion, the transcendental activity which constitutes us as persons. But it is important to notice that this act which constitutes me is not different from the creative activity which moves in evolution; only in the personality it reaches more complete and definite realization. The "pure act" which is the generative impulse of my empirical ego has the same characteristics as those which we observed in the creative life of nature. It seeks unity through plurality, value through the overcoming of negativity, truth through the overcoming of error, and goodness through the overcoming of evil.

Is there any reason why Christians should hesitate

[1] Cf. the writer's essay on "The Limits of Psychological Inquiry" in *Psychology and the Church* (Macmillan).

to affirm that there is a divine activity at the root of every human soul? It is at least certain that some of the most powerful preaching of the Gospel in our time deliberately bases itself on the proclamation of "the Christ in the ordinary man."[1] It is feared perhaps that along this line of thought we should represent Jesus as a "mere man." But are we sure that we know what "a mere man" is, or that any one of us is "merely" man? The most orthodox doctrine is that Jesus reveals to us not only God but man, He is the New Adam, who shows what humanity truly is. We need not fear that we shall dethrone Jesus from His rightful Lordship by seeking to understand His kinship with ourselves. Though the divine Thought or Act is indeed the ground of our being, it is in us frustrated, overwhelmed by negativity, unexpressed in any fullness because of our sins. In Jesus the Divine Logos shines through all the acts and thoughts of the empirical ego. We find in Him a human life and character completely unified by the unwavering obedience to the Father's will, and illuminated by an unclouded consciousness of the Divine presence. In Him we find the continual triumph over negativity even through suffering. He is a man of the First Century and His mind moves in the categories of His time and nation, but His thought overcomes the temporary and erroneous elements which were inherent in the forms of thought and fashions, through them and out of them, a spiritual and moral ideal which is independent of time and place. He is a man who is hemmed in by circum-

[1] See Mr. G. Studdert Kennedy's *Food for the Fed Up*, and indeed all his writings.

stance, obstructed by the stupidities, respectabilities, prejudices, habits, of the social environment, by all the forms in which negativity invades and mechanizes and damps down the life of the Spirit. In the face of them He experiences disappointment and pain, but not defeat. They become the material for a greater victory, so that the Man on the cross is incomparably greater than any calm unruffled teacher of morals or religion, immeasurably more fitted than any other to be the spiritual ruler of mankind. And finally He encounters that experience in which negativity seems to be summed up, the contemplation of which fills our minds with the melancholy foreboding that the downward movement in the world is destined to prevail over the upward striving—He encounters death. But in the faith and experience of Christians He has overcome this last enemy and made the supreme instance of negation the instrument of unlimited life. He is "defined as the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead."

It is perhaps wise to attempt to avoid a misunderstanding of the view of the Person of Christ which has been outlined. It might be alleged that we have found in Christ only a representation, an image, of the activity of the Divine Word; or again, it might be said that our belief was that a part only of the divine Thought which is also Act, found expression in Jesus. Both these misinterpretations, however, would be founded upon the error of transferring to the activity of Spirit modes of thought which apply only to the spatial and material. We cannot divide the Pure Act which is the source of all empirical reality nor separate it from the manifestations in

which it finds expression as if the one could exist without the other. The Word of God fully revealed in the Person and the life of Jesus is not a part of or an image of the Word of God, the Creator; He is the same Word "through whom the worlds were made," and without whom no process of evolution would exist.

At the risk of unnecessary reiteration we will now proceed to sum up the main points of the preceding argument. The problem of Christology begins with a value-judgment. Until we have found in Christ the supreme Guide to life we have no motive for considering the nature of His Person. We cannot, however, rest in a mere value-judgment but are impelled to relate Him to our conception of the general structure of Reality. Any view which in modern times can be regarded as adequate must allow for the fact of evolution, though a purely evolutionary philosophy will not, in the long run, be found to explain even the fact of evolution. Evolution is not incompatible with Ethical Monotheism nor with the belief in creation. From the standpoint of Theism we must think of evolution as involving both a self-limitation of God and a self-expression and fulfilment. The Divine Life, immanent in creation, is seeking ever more adequate expression. Its characteristic activity can be abstractly stated as the production of richer and more definite types of unity in plurality and the achievement of higher values through the overcoming of negativity. In human personality and the values which it creates and sustains we may clearly discern the supreme product of the evolutionary process and therefore the most adequate

expression of the Divine. In personality, however, we are brought face to face with a type of being in which that transcendent element which we postulated as implicit in all evolution is most evident. No person is wholly explicable on evolutionary lines, and we are compelled to recognize as the basis of the empirical ego a transcendental ego. The concept of "thinking substance" is not any more satisfactory than that of material substance, and we are consequently led to think of that which constitutes the personality as "act" rather than "substance." There is a sense in which all persons have a divine Ground and the Logos is truly the light of every man. But it is very far from being true that all persons are divine, for the actual empirical ego is enmeshed in negativity, not unified by a central purpose into a coherent whole, spoiled by error slothfully accepted and by evil not overcome. In the Person of Jesus the creative life which we may discern working through all the course of evolution, the creative Act which we may perceive as the ground of our personalities, overcomes all the limitations which have prevented it from finding complete expression. Here we find unbroken unity through plurality, the triumphant creation of spiritual value by the overcoming of every form of negation. The empirical, historical personality of Jesus is the adequate incarnation in time and space of the Eternal Word.

This brief sketch of a modern Christology doubtless leaves many questions unanswered; and the present writer is deeply conscious that its full explanation and defence would demand many discussions for which there is no space here, even if he were capable

of carrying them through to a successful conclusion. Perhaps the Christian reader will allow himself to be exhorted once again to reflect on the need for stating what faith has found in Jesus in terms which are intelligible to modern minds, and to consider whether a presentation of the doctrine of Christ's Person on the lines indicated in this essay does not preserve and indeed make more real to us the Grace of God in Christ. In the light of evolutionary thought we can understand better than our forefathers how all things are "summed up in Christ." In the light of our deeper conception of personality we can see how Jesus may truly be the Incarnate Thought and Act of God and yet not separated from us by an impassable gulf of difference. The piety which would be nourished upon such a conception of the Person of the Lord would be, like that of St. Paul, a Christ-mysticism. But it would be far removed from quietism. It would be a life in Christ, reproducing in its measure the notes of the typical and creative Christ-life, unity through plurality, and the heroic conquest of negativity. The society which had such piety as its soul would be no seeker after an illusory and static Utopia, but would be filled with indomitable energy to encounter all obstacles and, through transcending them, constantly bring into being higher modes of the common life. And the Church which had this faith would indeed strive to hold fast a "form of sound words" that its spiritual treasure might be transmitted from generation to generation, but first of all it would be the brotherhood of those who consciously walked "in newness of life."

VI

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

By Professor H. R. Mackintosh, D.D.

A QUESTION which many of us as children were accustomed to put to ourselves may be thus expressed: What makes the world go and keeps it from falling to pieces? It was our first effort at juvenile metaphysics. A like question must frequently arise in the minds of Christians who have begun to reflect on the conditions of their religious experience. What keeps the Christian life going in individual or Church, and provides against its total and irremediable extinction? The answer is, "The Holy Spirit of God." In the pages that follow we shall be occupied with the elucidation of these words. Broadly, the problem of the Spirit is the problem of the living contact of God with man.[1]

The doctrine of the Spirit is in no sense a third independent item in Christian belief, side by side with

[1] This, with due emphasis on the *synthetic* meaning of the conception "Spirit"—it signifies the unity or union of God with men, and, from another point of view, the unity of objective revealing history with inner experience—is the theme of Winkler's stimulating pamphlet, *Das Geistproblem* (1926).

the doctrines of God and of Jesus Christ. In the last resort, the doctrine of God embraces all that can be object of faith. If we say provisionally that the Spirit is God acting in the human world for the communication of His own life, it follows that the activity of the Spirit is no less vital to Christianity as a living and redeeming faith than the revelation conveyed through the Jesus of history. Without the Spirit, the revelation would have spent itself in the air because the impression made by Jesus could not have been perpetuated. Christians have usually been willing to confess their inability to "realize" Jesus in His saving power (His power, that is, to bring them into fellowship with God despite their sin), except as an influence felt to be from above has enabled them to recognize and appropriate the truth. It is impossible to apprehend Christ as Saviour and Lord simply by making a great effort; no one can love God and man merely by trying hard. No friend or preacher by any skill or technique of soul-management can persuade a man to be reconciled to God. To quote the words of Luther in his Catechism: "I am persuaded that I cannot, by my own reason or power, believe in or come to Jesus Christ my Lord, but that the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me by His gifts, and sanctified and upheld me in true faith." If, then, the doctrine of the Spirit did not exist, it would have to be created for the adequate interpretation of the religious facts. It indicates a power, not ourselves yet working in us, without which no results commensurate with the significance of Jesus would be actualized in the experience of Church or individual. Religion arises

in persons or groups because there is a Holy Spirit, the Divine *prius* of Christian faith and life. If, in virtue of Jesus, specifically Christian faith stands rooted in the past, the dynamic now and ever operative in it is the Spirit of God.

Modern thought concerning the Spirit will naturally seek to affiliate itself to the supreme religious witness contained in the Bible, not indeed by way of slavish bondage to words but for contact with the living source of its convictions. Thus, as we endeavour to state worthily the certainties about the Spirit found in the hearts of those who through Jesus Christ believe and trust in God, we cannot do better than begin by considering briefly the teachings of the Old and New Testaments, with, of course, special regard to the insight of the great apostolic believers who first bore creative testimony to Jesus and His influence.

The Old Testament finds the Spirit of God to be the source of every abnormal phenomenon throughout the religious and ethical sphere, and particularly of the inspiration of the prophets and the wonderful feats accomplished by the great men of Israel. At first the working of the Spirit has a look of irregular accident, which cannot be brought within the circle of natural causation and therefore is Divine ; and the surest token of the Spirit's presence appears to be ecstasy. After a time, however, this convulsive condition makes room for a higher type of prophecy, which no longer exhibited mere storms of feeling but issued in a clear and communicable word or message due to apprehension of the moral character of Jahweh. Such prophets discern a continuity

in the acts of God within His people's history; and the trend of these acts, once perceived, becomes a test of all other declarations of His will. Trances and tumultuous emotions more and more give way to steadfast, deepening convictions; and the later and widely diffused expectation of a Messianic age in which all God's people, not the prophets only, would share, pointed rather to a lucid spiritual knowledge of God than to ecstatic moods or seizures.

In the New Testament there is shown at once a larger experience and a clearer discrimination of the Spirit's workings, which are only described in so far as they relate to men within the Christian fellowship. Nothing is said regarding operations in or upon Nature.

The Gospels depict Jesus as receiving a special endowment of the Spirit at His baptism; also they enable us to see that for Jesus' own mind the Spirit was the source of His miraculous works. He is Himself the great instance of the Spirit-possessed life; the Divine power rested on Him as a permanent, not a fitful gift, and in some degree was to pass from Him to His disciples. There is no suggestion that even in part He traced His knowledge of God to ecstatic experiences, nor, in promising the supernatural aid of the Spirit to His followers in the later emergencies of their work, does He contemplate the Spirit as being imparted to them through ecstasy. He trains them, rather, in active faith and love.

To the apostles and their readers the Spirit was not a doctrine so much as an experience. As Denney insists, the chief question is not whether a convert

believes in, but whether he has received, the Holy Spirit; and interest revolves round what is done rather than the nature of the Doer. St. Paul, to take our most important authority, is familiar with the Spirit primarily in life, not in Hellenistic books; what he knows, moreover, is not a promise for the future but a present fact; and the Spirit-impelled life for him is a reality quite recognizably given alike in his own experience and that of his churches. Faith and the presence of the Spirit are equivalent ideas. Nothing is of any account in Christianity except that in which the Spirit is manifested. This may have an extravagant look, but it becomes altogether intelligible when we reflect that for St. Paul the Spirit is the living energy of God as presented, concentrated and made available in the exalted Christ. Occasionally it seems as though the Spirit were regarded as the element, so to say, in which Christ and Christians live and are in touch with each other. Spirit is above all impulse or impetus that breaks out in ineffable longings and yearnings such as may not in every case have risen to the level of clear thought.

According to St. Paul, what the Spirit does is to produce: (1) *holiness*, as consecration to God with its resulting personal goodness, for it is in the power of the Spirit that the believer vanquishes or puts to death the flesh; (2) *unity*, for believers are one body as all being partakers of the one Spirit, though we must not turn this into the statement that for the apostle Spirit is only a generalized personification of the Christian consciousness; (3) *assurance*, for it is the Spirit that makes men certain of salvation alike

for the present and the future—it is a guarantee, because an instalment, of eternal life. Probably it is in connection with "holiness" that St. Paul's originality is most evident. Here, as Gunkel first pointed out, he effected what is nothing less than an epoch-making change of emphasis. Formerly, the average Christian in Corinth or Galatia had conceived the proper marks of the Spirit's presence to be bizarre or exceptional things—speaking with tongues, miraculous healings and the like. St. Paul placed the accent on moral phenomena, ethical effects issuing in a permanent character. But what are "ethical effects"? On this the term "spirit" tells us nothing; the history of religions proves, indeed, that as a word it need have no *moral* significance. There must be some way of deciding whether the spirit possessing a man is Divine or the reverse. This discriminating standard the apostle supplied by defining the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, and thereby imparting to word and idea both precision and reality. The primary effect of the Spirit is to evoke confession of the Lordship of *Jesus*. In His light it is quite clear what a *holy* Spirit is, or a holy impulse; it is one manifested (as supremely in Jesus) by sacrifice, devotion to the uttermost, love, humility, purity. If God wills anything, He must will this. Thereby Christian piety and practice moved out of the abnormal and fantastic into the world of spiritual personality. Once it was understood that ecstasy or power to heal sickness by a word is less important than Christlikeness, the hold of faith upon conscience became inexpressibly deeper. Before long glossolalia was to disappear, and if unfailing evidence of the

Spirit's operation was to abide, it must be found in power to obey and resemble Christ. All this is one proof more how much "the historic Christ" meant for St. Paul and how, so far from betraying Christianity to Hellenism, he did more than any other to prevent Hellenism from absorbing Christianity. None the less, the Spirit and ethical experience must not be regarded as simply coincident; for St. Paul, Christ is not merely a historical fact but a living and life-bestowing Spirit, perpetually reproducing in believers the Divine qualities revealed in the Gospel portrait. All the qualities are ethical; the power by which they are evoked is religious. The ascendency thus gained by the higher impulses of man over the lower is not secured through any magical fiat, as when disease is expelled by drugs; it is mediated at every point through the believer's thought and volition. What effects the change is not the impact of the Spirit *ab extra*, in the manner of a natural or cosmic force, but the power of God acting through such truth as is fitted, if believed, to tell on conscience and heart.

Like St. Paul, the Fourth Gospel stresses ethical and spiritual experience in contrast to ecstatic and possibly morbid impulse. In conversing with Nicodemus, Jesus speaks of birth from the Spirit as distinct from birth of the flesh (i.e. creaturely life) as a condition of entering the Kingdom of God. The pre-requisite on which He insists is evidently not glossolalic or even prophetic ecstasy but the possession of Divine life—life which formed the permanent and inmost reality of His own Person and which He was able to communicate to believing men. Similarly,

the promise of the Spirit contained in His parting words, as reported by this Evangelist, has no relation to the ecstatic manifestations of the apostolic and post-apostolic age. The Spirit that should replace Jesus for the disciples is represented as dwelling continuously in all, to keep His words alive in their minds and empower them to bear effective testimony on His behalf. It is plain, too, that the " pneumatic " experience of the Church at Pentecost and after is felt to be unintelligible except as the sequel of Jesus' death and resurrection.

We cannot here treat in detail the history of the conception or doctrine of the Spirit within the Church. Experience could not be wholly neglected, yet the exposition was given too much from the Trinitarian or ontological point of view, too little from that of actual religious life. But the Trinitarian construction was neither superfluous nor aberrant. The ancient Church, after having, by its doctrine of the homoousia or co-essentiality of the Son with the Father, vindicated the religious certainty that face to face with Christ we are in the presence of God Himself, rightly proceeded to affirm the homoousia of the Spirit with the Father and the Son. Once we have gained the great conviction that through Christ we have been made God's true children, we cannot afresh nullify this truth by conceding that the life thus implanted in the redeemed soul and the redeemed community is no more than creaturely, and is Divine only in name. The Spirit that witnesses of Christ, making effective in heart and mind the salvation He brought near, is the Giver of authentically Divine life, of life which as such is

eternal, and is eternally inseparable from God's very being.

In stating our faith in the Spirit's mighty energies, our point of departure, as indicated at the outset of this essay, may well be an experimental postulate. We cannot of ourselves appreciate or grasp the saving presence of God in Christ, for in great part our natural impulses are hostile to God and the godlike. Accordingly, since Christian faith is a fact, a Divine power or influence must exist by which faith is initiated and maintained—a Divine agency, by which all that can be called salvation is made personally ours, and which in this great work is indivisibly one with the Father and the Son. This we call "Spirit," not merely because of a long and rich tradition, but because only by the word "Spirit" can we denote that quality or element of personal being in virtue of which a bridge can be thrown from mind to mind, and one personality can embrace and stimulate another. Faith and holiness confessedly are no independent outcome of the human will, their source must therefore be above. "In their service for God men are supported and enlightened by a power that comes from God, and can only be called His Spirit."[1] Or to put it otherwise, with the Church of all ages we believe in God as beyond yet also within us. When specifically Christian faith reads the meaning of the world, it owns that "the Spirit of God moving the hearts of men is the guiding and formative agency in the process, bearing with His creatures the whole stress and pain of the world

[1] E. F. Scott, *The Spirit in the New Testament*, p. 251.

and drawing them to Himself with the infinite patience of love." [1]

Such a moving Divine presence is the chief, indeed the only, preservative of the Church from two ruinous evils, which in the past have wrought havoc yet have never wholly triumphed. The first of these is traditionalism, that tendency or temper which puts obedience to ecclesiastical authority first and personal assurance or conviction second. Orthodoxy in the bad sense may be defined as the view that statements of Christian truth have been composed which admit of no improvement. Such formulas only need to be handed on to ensure the propagation of the Gospel. No heresy could be more soul-destroying. If Christ is so remote that our relationship to Him must be mediated by official dogma, He is really out of touch with men. But this means that tradition has replaced the living Spirit. As against this, what the Church is summoned to believe is that, since Christ, we live in an age where in religion the statutory has made way for the vital and spontaneous. Through the Spirit we are in contact with the free and living Lord. God has been revealed in Jesus; in and through the Spirit His life is communicated. This being assumed, it follows of itself that a truth-loving and loyal tradition is one of the chief means by which the Spirit commends to the hearts of men all such truth as is fitted to quicken fellowship with God.

The second evil against which the Spirit affords a powerful safeguard is magical or sub-moral thoughts of grace. Now we have no cause to affirm that the

[1] A. S. Pringle-Pattison, *The Spirit* (edited by B. H. Streeter), p. 3.

Spirit works only through the Christian gospel. It is forbidden so to limit the Lord and Giver of life. Yet to Christian reflection it is surely plain that the personal influence of God has been most characteristically and most decisively mediated through truth as truth is in Jesus. We have our clearest look at the kind of effect indicative of the Spirit when we contemplate the result that flows in human life from the heartfelt apprehension of Divine mercy and judgment in Christ. This means that the Spirit properly acts through media capable of affecting a moral nature. Causation between persons can never be a barely mechanical impetus ; there it becomes motivation, appeal, persuasion in some sense ; for persons are persons, and in action or reaction they cannot be only things. That by which the Spirit appeals to man is no vague undecipherable impulse or impartation from the unseen, stirring a dim craving in the blood ; it is the truth of God, in some commanding form, truth of such a kind that persons react upon it positively by way either of faith or unbelief. This might seem to extrude mystery from the Spirit's work, but it is not so. The full mystery of the Spirit's operation lies within the sphere of consciousness. Is any mystery so great, for example, as conversion ? Yesterday, with the fact of Christ before him, the man could not cast himself on God ; to-day, in presence of the same unchanging fact, he has made up his mind for God and adheres to Him in adoring faith and gratitude. Here it is the change in conviction, attitude, intention that evokes our wonder and calls for explanation ; and it is a change produced by *truth* (truth concerning God

to which, as we say colloquially, "his eyes have been opened"), not in any sense a change traceable to queer fermentations in the subliminal realm of mind. When truth is made unimportant, under cover of the charge that it forms an obscuring screen between personalities rather than a uniting medium, the result invariably is to impair that reverential sense of distance between creature and holy Creator which forms an integral part of the authentically religious experience. It is assumed, if we may put it so, that at any time any man can step across into the presence of the Most High, despite his sin; it is forgotten that the sinful can only approach God when, by spontaneous revelation and the inward moving of His power, He persuasively enables them to draw near. Neglect of the essentially mediating significance of truth in religion is constantly attended by physical or quasi-physical conceptions of grace, but wherever grace is interpreted as the personal influence of God, truth, as the appeal and gift of mind to mind, will never be disparaged. But when we say "truth," as Christians we simultaneously must say "Holy Spirit." Without truth, man would be acted upon in some arbitrary and unverifiable sense, his conscience left dark and unawakened; without the Spirit, he might be coldly convinced, but not moved or possessed.

In this region the most striking New Testament contribution to terminology is the name "Spirit of Christ." As employed by the great believers of the first age it appears to convey three decisive meanings.

(1) It is the Spirit manifest in Christ Himself. The prophet, Otto reminds us, does not fill the highest place in the world of religion. "We can think of a third, yet higher, beyond him, a stage of revelation as underivable from that of the prophet as his was from that of common men. We can look to one in whom is found the Spirit in all its plenitude, and who at the same time in his person and in his performance is become most completely the object of divination, in whom Holiness is recognized apparent. Such a one is more than Prophet. He is the Son." [1] In Jesus there dwelt a living power not of earth by virtue of which He knew the Father and the Kingdom purposed by the Father's will, and at the same time maintained a perfect ethical purity and strength. It was supremely a Spirit of sonship, of an unfathomable communion, which both fed and in turn was fed by His compassionate service of man. Hence the Spirit, thus understood, can be recognized in all whose attitude to God resembles the attitude of Jesus, and who have been brought to this through their debt to Him. The word "Spirit" is one of the vaguest in human language, but if we mean the Spirit that filled and animated Jesus Christ, we know what we are saying and can control our declarations. The term is no longer such that men can say of it what they like, because they are dealing with an unknown quantity in a vacuum. No other "spirit" could be mistaken for the Spirit of Jesus.

(2) It is the Spirit imparted by Christ. When, after the Resurrection, the New Testament represents the exalted Lord as "pouring forth" the Spirit on

[1] *The Idea of the Holy*, p. 182.

believers, we have to think of Him as conveying to others that which He Himself had fully possessed. Nothing pertaining to the inner life can be given which has not been personally owned. And it is most signally through Christ that the Spirit of power resident in God becomes active in the lives of men. Through faith they become partakers in the power of Jesus, which acts upon believers now as it acted on the disciples by His side, and even more effectively. Christ is not the first Christian merely; He is the Lord. From Him who overcame sin and death there is ever proceeding a transcendent Personal Presence, to transform all who identify themselves with Him. Surely it gives us something to think about, that Christ's last and highest bestowal on men should have been not new ideas or rules or dogmas, or even a new morality, but the Spirit that was His own. Thereby Christianity is constituted the religion of freedom, of infinite and perpetual rejuvenation of lives that have regained touch with Jesus.

(3) It is the Spirit that witnesses of Christ. The New Testament, as has been pointed out, lays down that no utterance of the Spirit can be accepted as genuine unless in some unmistakable way it bears testimony to Jesus. When Christ and His great aims command our thought, that Divine Presence is known to be at work. To say that we have the Spirit now and need Jesus no longer can never be legitimate, for apart from Him "Spirit" has no reality that our minds can apprehend. The New Testament does not stress the claim of the Spirit to our self-abandoning faith as it does that of Christ; rather, to speak figuratively, the Holy Spirit is ever

hidden behind Christ, who is the proximate object for faith of which the Spirit is the ultimate productive source. That Spirit is Divine by whose reinforcement we envisage and apprehend Christ as the representative of God, come for our deliverance, and come in weakness, humiliation and death. No man can call *Jesus* Lord, but by the Spirit. Anything else he might do with an effort; he might even call the Logos "Lord" by way of speculative achievement; but to find the secret of all things, for God and man, in One who suffered and died—this confession man can win from himself solely as transcendent Divine power comes to his aid. This identification of the content of Holy Spirit with what faith beholds in Jesus explains why the Spirit's work should be precisely what it is—viz., to make men holy, to lead them into ever new truth, to send them out for the reclamation of the world. For the Spirit of the Son of God is a Spirit of selfless love.

Yet the designation "Spirit of Christ" cannot be final or exhaustive. Faith is unsatisfied until, in face of the highest realities, it dares to pronounce the name "God." Is then the Spirit of Christ *eo ipso* the very Spirit of God? How could it be otherwise? It may safely be affirmed that the man who has breathed in something of the Spirit of Christ knows, without reasoning, that the great presence in his heart is that of God Himself. It is a spirit of holiness, of love, of transcendent and creative power to abolish sin and tragedy, to transmute shame into glory; but, as we Christians hold, God is the Absolute Personality in whom just such love, holiness and power meet in perfect unity. Not that the Christian thinker pursues

an argument upon the point, deducing the divinity of the Spirit formally. But intuitively he perceives that there is only one right name for the wondrous and mighty agency that contact with Jesus has brought to bear on him. With equal directness we see the Spirit to be holy and to be Divine.

Can a man possess the Spirit and know it? For answer, St. Paul, apparently, would refer us not to such things as the laying on of hands, but to faith. The conclusive sign of the Spirit's activity is confidence toward God of a quality we cannot place in our fellows, since they too are guilty and finite; a confidence which is, as it were, but the human side of the very life of God within, urging us into union and communion with Himself. Such faith, in its transforming power, is the supreme realization of God's purpose in our being; He made us that He might reign within us; and this becomes possible only as His gift to us—a gift which itself includes the Giver. So long as we hold convictions to which the term "absolute" may rightly be applied because they are beyond all price, so long as we feel that to part with Christ would be unendurable pain because of what we owe to Him—so long we may know that God has not taken His Holy Spirit from us.

This personal influence or presence, then, has been diffused among men in an exceptional degree since Christ lived and died. We need not now dispute whether the Spirit ought to be conceived primarily as a possession of the believing community or of the individual; the distinction, if seriously pressed, at once becomes unreal. Let us recollect, at all events, that the Spirit we are discussing is that of One who

not merely touched and changed single lives but established a Kingdom. This Divine fellowship, with history as its sphere, affords an ever richer medium in which the powers of the Spirit can unfold. Since Christ's departure, there has been, as appears to have been His own anticipation, a wider and profounder activity of the Spirit than during His earthly life. All this, however, would vanish in ethereal abstractions were it to be forgotten that the presence of the Spirit is enjoyed, and, so to say, registered and verified, at individual finite centres. It is an excellence of the Church, as the *communio sanctorum*, that within it the one indivisible Spirit of God attains, in variously endowed personalities, an infinitely diversified expression. None the less, of each member of the Body of Christ without exception it can be truly affirmed that within him there dwells, permanently not fitfully, and however impeded or obscured, the same Spirit as constituted the inmost life of Jesus. How seldom are these infinite resources utilized! The New Testament undoubtedly leads us to believe that the Spirit opens such deep fountains of triumphant life and pours from them such a wealth of love for God and man, that noble relationships between self and neighbour ought to be their natural fruit and issue. It must be so, for "Spirit" means the living energy of God whereby He creates in man at once the good desire and its accomplishment. In such a view, there are moral implications of tremendous gravity. When in Church we pray for a bestowal of the Spirit, with a fullness hitherto unknown, we may fail to realize how shattering might be the impact of such a gift on our conventional world. Fearless

and abiding brotherhood, victorious serenity, simple joy—these, when they arrive, make all things new.

This has a direct and crucial bearing on the prospects of the Christian enterprise. Does not the idea and experience of the Spirit represent that which the missionary may offer with confidence, say to Eastern peoples, as capable of satisfying their hunger for Union with God? Hinduism, for example, is doubtless beset by pantheistic illusion; yet are we merely to counter this with what may be called the granular theory of human personality, according to which the advancing development of the soul is accompanied *pari passu* by its ever-increasing severance from God? The New Testament pictures of the Spirit-filled life might have been immediately designed to meet and quench that yearning for unity with God which characterizes the higher reaches of Indian thought. If we cling to the fundamental truth that what is in question is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, that Pentecost implies the historical revelation, then the danger that Oriental influences may lead the Christian mind out into the trackless desert of vague and barren reverie may be ignored.

Only as the Church avails itself of the ineffable promise of the Spirit does its assigned task become capable of accomplishment or even of conception. Orthodoxy has perhaps been too apt to assume that the age of miracles is past, and that "for good and wise reasons God has straitened the early gift of the Spirit and put us under a more rigid and limited dispensation." But we cannot disregard the fact that the great missionaries have invariably been animated by convictions of a quite opposite kind; they

have believed that in faith we may reckon as assuredly on the Spirit of God and the boundless potencies therein contained as upon the unchanging moral order. There is a limitless assistance on which we may count in the emergencies of the Divine Kingdom.[1]

While it is thus instructive to dwell upon the name "Spirit of Christ," this must not be understood as in any sense delimiting or impoverishing the realm of experience from which data may be gathered. In particular—and here the Old Testament has peculiar value—a place must be found for all that is known concerning the Spirit's activity in Nature and in the higher life of man.[2] We must learn from philosophy, from science, from psychology,[3] from the practice and the theory of art. If it be true that from God all strong and holy thoughts proceed, we cannot but refer to His informing and ever-active Spirit those aspiring and ennobling impulses which, even outside the Christian province, have engendered the supreme values of human life. It is still to that loftier source that we have to trace all sound progress in knowledge, in the creation of beauty, in the purifying and elevation of manhood. God by His Spirit has ever been present in the lives of men, inspiring each right desire,

[1] Cf. D. S. Cairns in *The Missionary Message* (1910).

[2] It is for this reason, amongst others, that we do not *identify* the Spirit with Christ, even the risen Christ; though too much emphasis cannot be laid on the fact that in Christ alone we have a finally valid clue to the Spirit's quality or character.

[3] Modern psychology, so far from making a doctrine of the Spirit otiose, is casting new light on the forms and methods in which the Spirit's work is done.

each effort after truth and loveliness. And yet we cannot afford to lose all over again the right perspective taught by the New Testament. Without prejudice to these more general issues, nay, in the light of them, it must still be held that only in experiences related to the Person of Jesus Christ do we encounter the operations of the Spirit in their most revealing and distinctive form, and can discern most clearly the Divine redeeming purpose with which they are laden. Only in the communion of sonship and pardon do the living energies of God in their fullness descend upon human souls. No sphere of truth, goodness or beauty can be withdrawn from that supernal influence ; and indeed, as has been pointed out, it is the fundamental work of the Spirit of God that we should be constituted spirits at all, by the cardinal act of the Infinite accepting the limitations of the finite.[1] But it is the supreme and peculiar work of the Spirit, which crowns and interprets all else, to reveal the Son in love and power to men, to awaken them to repentance and faith, to assure them of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, and to enable them to know and obey the will of God.

Nothing less or lower than what is personal can have a place in God : it is therefore inevitably by way of the category of the personal that we throw out our minds in the effort to reach an ontological interpretation of the Spirit's being. Thereby, however, we do not mean to indicate a separate centre of consciousness and will in a Godhead inclusive of other

[1] H. Wheeler Robinson, in the *Expository Times* for August, 1924, p. 491.

such separate centres, as though God were divided and in parts. The resolve to ascribe to the Holy Spirit a personality sundered from the Father and the Son is in peril, often, of tritheistic error. Since Christ is a person, it has been argued unsoundly, personality in the same sense must be predicable of the Spirit. Personality, it is true, was an essential condition of incarnation, but of the Spirit incarnation is not affirmed. In short, we cannot conceive the Spirit as distinct from God, the God who is Spirit and whose the Spirit is ; tritheism is forbidden to Christian thought. In St. Augustine's phrase : *Ter dixi Deum, non tres deos.*

On the other hand, the Spirit of the living God cannot be impersonal, and it must in the last issue be unmeaning to describe the indwelling Divine agent of all that can be called redemption as either an idea or a force. If by the Holy Spirit the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, no *thing* is adequate to the production of such effects. Only in and through a personal medium could the life and love of God be communicated to persons, whereas a " thing " must form an impediment to transparent and complete fellowship. So wholly indeed is the Spirit of personal character and quality, that it is only by union therewith that we are constituted personalities in the full sense of that word as applied to men. To have within, as the formative element of self, that interior Spirit of loving energy whereby Jesus became the Saviour of the world—this is to be consummated in personal being. No formula will cover all the facts ; yet, as I believe, we may not unworthily affirm that Christ is God appearing in one finite spirit for our

salvation, while the Spirit is God filling as new energizing life all those to whom the Son has made the Father known. Accordingly, when a Christian utters the word "God," he means, if his faith has become fully explicit, not less than Father, Son and Spirit. The Spirit, far from being a bestowed substitute for God, is God's very presence—not temporary or subordinate as a charisma, but the experienced possession of eternal and absolute Reality.

VII

THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS

By Canon Charles E. Raven, D.D.

WHATEVER be the ultimate value of Hegelianism, and at present philosophers are in evident reaction against it, the endeavour to trace a threefold rhythm, thesis, antithesis, synthesis, in the movement of life remains a singularly fruitful source of speculation. All such classifications can obviously be so pressed as to seem artificial and machine-made: life is a whole and every analysis of its manifestations is in the last resort inadequate, a *façon de penser* rather than a reproduction of reality. Yet, if biologists like Professors Thomson and Geddes can take a movement in these three phases as the clearest version of the "song of life," the historian need not be condemned as fanciful if he finds a similar scheme illuminative of human progress. Quite obviously in the history of vital Christianity we can note the passage of two such phases, and the present commencement of the third.

For in the first great period of Christian history the stress is continually upon the embodiment of the new religion in an appropriate institutional system. Rome had given to the world the pattern of organized efficiency; the *respublica* which had inspired her

cults was consolidated in the *imperium* and in the achievement, splendid but transitory, of a unity of effort and ideal. She had taught men to live as members of an ordered commonwealth, and in the moment of her zenith had given to the world the brilliance and solid accomplishment of the Augustan age. It is not necessary to recall the steps by which inevitably the Church followed the lead and took over the functions of the Empire, stressing ever more clearly the sanctity of corporate life and of the organization by which the society maintained and expressed its unity. Culminating in the Hildebrandine age, the first great phase of Christian activity displayed an example of the abiding worth of institutional religion which our own time is at last beginning to appreciate.

The thesis necessarily gave place to antithesis. The stress upon the outward had not since the Third Century been accompanied by an equal stress upon the inward. Speculation had hardened into dogma and dogma degenerated into a code of rules. Mankind, whom Christ had treated as persons and one by one, was regimented and standardized. The Spirit of God was first embodied in, then imprisoned by and finally identified with the Machine. And Man revolted. Deeply as we may regret some of the methods of his rebellion, few, if any, unbiased historians will deny the necessity and the worth of the Reformation. Whatever sentence we pass on the wisdom of particular Protestants, a protest on behalf of the priority of the Spiritual and the liberty of the child of God to be treated as a person, was a restatement of principles essential to a Christian way

of life. Individualism, to the defects of which we are now not likely to be blind, gave us a larger and richer concept of God, the only concept which could recover for the world the universality of the Gospel and for the Church the elasticity of a living organism, which could appreciate the discoveries of pioneers and prevent the society from dying of senile decay. If eccentricity and sectarianism have their disadvantages; if a purely "spiritual" religion is for us on earth an illusion; if individual liberty is always dangerous and often disastrous, at least the second phase need not fear comparison with the first, whether we judge it by its achievements or by its conformity with the mind of Christ.

To adjust the balance between inward and outward, realizing that the welfare of an organism is definable as the co-operation and poise of the two when spirit and body perfectly express the one life, is plainly the task of the age of Christianity now beginning. As such it involves a radical reform in every department of religious life, a reform which is already on the way to accomplishment. We are discovering that the isolated individual is fit only for the madhouse; that personality involves and is perfected in fellowship; that development demands that the individual be social and the society capable of bringing him to full stature; that the contrast between personal and corporate religion is false and destructive. We have to correct the aberrations of persons and sects by enabling them to recover and realize their membership in the whole Church; and we have to test every aspect of institutional religion by the challenge, "Does this creed or custom, cult or condition of

membership correspond with the Spirit of Christ and develop spiritual life among men ? "

This essay is not concerned with the process as a whole but simply with the illustrations of it supplied by a consideration of Church and Sacraments. To study the matter on broad lines will lead us to principles in the light of which particular issues will perhaps solve themselves.

There is emerging among Christians of all denominations and schools of thought an agreement as to the truth of the sacramental principle—those who dislike the term maintain its meaning by calling it incarnational—the principle that for us men body and soul are aspects of the one life, and that in religion as elsewhere truth comes to us embodied. None would deny that in man's supreme experience, in what Professor Alexander calls the emergence of deity and the mystics know as the moment of union, " spirit with spirit can meet " ; though even here a harmony and preparation, physical and psychological, is necessary. But if we are to interpret this experience for ourselves or others, or to bring it into effective contact with vital activities, it must express itself through the imagery and energies of the outward and visible. The revolt against religious institutions, justified as it may be by many a tragic instance of particular abuses and much general inadequacy, is in its quest for a " purely spiritual " society the merest folly. Institutions we must have if our religion is to have any correspondence with its earthly environment. How any Christian who holds the belief that God is supremely revealed in the life of Jesus, in the spirit, soul and body of the Son of Man, can think otherwise,

is hard to understand. That a man is most truly himself when every aspect of his nature is perfectly expressing the undistracted self; that he will reach his fullness when the whole human family functions in all its parts as a single entity, would be disputed by few. And if so, the theorist will maintain, what the least attempt to translate theory into practice verifies, that the Church on earth must be realized in an organized society. Its institutional life will be itself a sacrament, the outward sign of the indwelling Spirit, the effective means to spiritual vitality. Such sacraments are not mere symbols: in expressing they also create and sustain relationships, which without them would lack vital completeness. As the word expresses, interprets and conveys the idea; as the hand-clasp signifies and enriches and seals the friendship, so the ordinances of religion rightly understood are the means of creating that which without them would be gravely defective. It is obviously true that the fruit of the Spirit is the ultimate proof of life in Christ, that where the Spirit is there is the Christian. Yet St. Peter[1] was right when, confessing the evidence of true discipleship, he yet realized that membership must be secured and sealed by the appropriate outward sign, that the community living not solely in the spirit but also in the body must urge the necessity for inward conviction to be ratified by outward act. We would not deny that such signs unless informed by spiritual reality are idolatrous, that their use is then strictly a prostitution, but we would insist that the possibility or even the fact of their misuse does not justify the

[1] Acts x. 44–8.

rejection of what is in fact indispensable. And that they are indispensable, the efforts of Christian bodies to do without them manifestly proves : all that then happens is that other, and on the whole not more satisfactory, symbols take the place of those hallowed by tradition.

While maintaining the necessity of institutions and being prepared to argue that those in general and catholic use have behind them a weight of authority from human experience and historical employment which cannot easily be set aside, it is manifest that the whole institutional apparatus, creed, cult, ceremony, sacrament, is in itself secondary. The basis of religion is life in God, the emergence in man of union with the eternal. As man he must translate this experience into a system of thought and speech and behaviour and administration. But when Jesus proclaimed that the Sabbath was made for man, He cut at the roots of the belief that the outward could be equated with the inward, that any institution whatever had about it the quality of absolute adequacy. It is natural and even right that when the old wine-skins are cracked by the ferment of new spiritual energies, men should look for new bottles in which to preserve the fresh vintage. History records many instances in which quite plainly the Spirit has been excluded from and denied by the institution which professes to embody Him. Every heresy, every schism bears its testimony to the inadequacy of the Church of its day. Whether rightly or wrongly caused, the schism testifies that the Church was not then fully discharging its function as the body of Him who is Lord of all good life. And to-day, not

less than of old, not only must existing organization be rigidly examined, but out of the wealth of past experiments many new means may be discovered for giving expression to the many-sided richness of the Spirit of Christ. A conception of the Church which induces us to resist the admission of women to our pulpits, or to condemn occasional acts of intercommunion, or to deny the title of Christian to the Quakers, or to treat the Creeds and Canons of the first Millennium as irreformable, is one which its holders should scrutinize with grave searchings of heart. Examination of principles may raise doubts as to whether such theories are reconcilable with a consistent account of God's dealings with man or compatible with the teaching and example of Jesus. Christian charity should make their advocates hesitate about enforcing as essential a view which outrages the consciences of a large majority of their fellow-countrymen, and of a great number of their fellow-Anglicans. And a protest in the opposite direction is hardly less necessary. If the individual can only reach full personality in membership, if Christ's religion would bind us all into a universal human brotherhood, then those who disregard the witness of Catholicism, or sneer at the social Gospel, or dispute the fitness of particular sacraments, should be urged to take thought what they do. Christ's logion, "If thou knowest what thou doest, thou art blessed: but if thou knowest not——" applies to us all. And from its acceptance will come penitence and humility, and that synthesis of truth and love which is so hard to reach and to maintain.

It has been claimed that there is on all sides a

willingness to accept the sacramental principle as a simple formula to express an obvious truth. Yet in the application of this principle there is very evident divergence. Certain of these differences will appear as we examine in closer detail the special subject of this essay, the Church and Sacraments.

That they are inseparable is clear enough. If the Church is, as we believe, essentially described as the Body of Christ, the organic medium in and by which His Spirit is given expression, the outward and visible sign and means of an inward and spiritual life, it exemplifies the same principle as underlies the specific sacraments. In each case the end is the interpretation into the terms of life within the frame of time and space of a relationship which is essentially eternal. The Church on earth is not the Communion of Saints or the Kingdom of God, though it ceases to be itself if it is not to the best of its members' ability the adequate embodiment of the eternal relationship of God to His children, the sacramental means for the realization of that relationship. Nor is it an arbitrary grouping of men and women resolved to seek God's way of life in fellowship, but free to dissolve their partnership at will and without loss. It is organic to the life of the Spirit; an essential condition of His functioning; a means necessary to salvation; for without it the individual cannot attain to that fellowship of worship and service which is essential to his own spiritual development and integral to the purpose of God. As a living entity (and despite much loose and inadequate talk of Corporate Personality and the Group Mind it is in a real sense such an entity) it must have the two qualities of continuity and growth,

both of which are fruitful causes of disagreement. Continuity is secured not by any one particular office, but by the power of the whole to serve the energies of the Spirit. In the present state of disunion it is idle to look for tests, even for such as are set out in the Lambeth Quadrilateral, as warranting us in unchurching others. The early history of the episcopate, or of Apostolic Succession, warns us not less plainly than the Christian character of non-episcopal bodies that we cannot tie down the Spirit to a particular system of administration, or build upon the legalistic convention of covenanted and uncovenanted mercies. That episcopacy was a right and necessary development, that it has conserved and promoted in many ways the smooth and effective functioning of the Body, that it is still able to show at least as good grounds for acceptance when tested by results as any other system, is probably undisputed. That it belongs to the *esse* of Christianity could only be maintained by one who identified means with ends and was woefully blind to the witness of the Spirit in non-episcopal ministries. It is probably true to say that no group of Christians who claim to be of the Church and who display the fruit of the Spirit can rightly be denied the claim. We may think their equipment defective: we may question the spiritual necessity of their separation from us: we may insist upon the irregularity of their ministry: but that we are justified in refusing them communion if they are drawn into unity of Spirit with us, or in treating them as outcastes from Christ, or in insisting as a condition of reunion upon any sort of ceremony which would imply a previously invalid ministry,

would seem in flat denial of the Spirit of Jesus: it would attach to uniformity in outward observances an importance against which His life and teaching were a continuous protest. Pharisaism is so plainly the besetting sin of the ecclesiastic, and so obviously the supreme object of Our Lord's condemnation, that Churchmen will be wise to watch meticulously every temptation to thank God that they are not as other men are.

Yet when that is said, it remains true that for many of us the Anglican Quadrilateral expresses not only what we conceive to be the plainest lessons of the past, but also the type of organized life best fitted to fulfil the work of the Spirit in the present. As episcopacy is freed from the bad traditions of the Eighteenth Century, as room is found for the full admission of women to full status in the Christian Ministry, as the equality of worth, though not of function, of all Christian people is recognized and made effective, as a larger liberty is given for speculation and experiment, and moreover as Christians see the grandeur of their calling and responsibility, abuses will disclose themselves and be remedied, organization will become elastic, and the Body will function freely. And meanwhile the fostering of all occasions of friendliness, the development of united action, and the concentration upon the effort to baptize the new learning and the new civilization into Christ will reveal to us the unreality of traditional antagonisms, the extent of existing agreement and the wastage and sin of disunion. Given a call to action, sufficient to grip the imagination, we should even now find ourselves swept into the fellowship of the Great Church.

The difficulties in the way of such a result, the habits of thought which militate against it, are best discovered by turning attention to the more limited field of the sacraments. If most of us are agreed as to the meaning and value of the sacramental principle, it is plain that we do not all carry the logic of our conviction into our exposition of particular sacraments. We may admit that to us " in the body " the spiritual is conveyed by its appropriate sign, that all things are done in parables, that the universe is itself God's great sacrament ; should we all agree upon what seems necessarily to follow—or even upon the subsequent points ? If the general principle be true, then surely it is wholly fitting, indeed inevitable, that the Church should have received and should hold certain particular ordinances of a sacramental character ; that she should express the great events and realities of the spiritual life in a system whereby the inward is symbolized and enhanced by the outward. Whether we limit ourselves to the two " Sacraments of the Gospel " or accept as sacraments the similar ordinances of Confirmation, Penance, Matrimony, Holy Orders and Unction, the principle is the same. Here is a means, typical of a universal law, not only conveying to us the assurance of a real and spiritual fact, but enabling us to develop the appreciation of the universality of the spiritual, and helping us so to live as to employ and to embody the Spirit's grace through every channel. By our use of the particular we are led to a general way of life which thus becomes sacramental through and through. We consecrate churches not only that men may have where to worship God, but that they may realize

every home and shop and factory as His house. We say special prayers largely that we may learn to pray without ceasing. We baptize that we may be empowered to rise again daily to newness of life. We partake of the Eucharist that in all our lives we may feed upon God and fulfil our fellowship with Him and one another. Through particular means, means singularly adapted to our human characters and needs, we are led into a way of life of which they are typical expressions and for which they should be effective agents.

It is plain that such an interpretation, while enforcing the appropriateness and in no wise diminishing the sanctity of special sacraments, will set them in relationship with a view of God's dealing in which it will be impossible to secure their value by denying the sacramental character of all other means of grace from the primrose to the kiss. As such many will view it with dislike. For the primary message of Jesus that God is giving Himself to us in the common things of every day is too grand for us to believe; and we fall back upon the pre-Christian notion, condemned even by the great pre-Christian prophets, that we do honour to God by hallowing certain means at the cost of profaning all else. There is a widespread tendency to divorce the sacraments from all the rest of life and from other means of grace; to contrast the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharist with that "where two or three are gathered together"; and to regard the consecration of the Elements as involving not a setting apart for a special use but an actual change in nature. That the Bread and Wine as consecrated have the value

of the Body and Blood of Christ, that is, that they enable and guarantee a real and intimate incorporation of us who receive them into Him, a real and effective bestowal of His very self upon us, we should maintain : but this, as Dr. Temple [1] admits, is not what transubstantiation means or has meant. Substance in that sense may be nowadays philosophically meaningless ; value may be the term best fitted to take its place : but the use of substance implied not a change of value enabling a particular use, but a change in the nature of the thing in itself. Transvaluation would involve no " miracle " : transubstantiation aimed at setting what happened in the Eucharist outside, and indeed in opposition to, the whole natural order. If Catholics are prepared to adopt the Bishop of Manchester's proposals, they will find themselves in agreement with a very large number who have hitherto stood aloof from them. In doing so they will be adopting an interpretation which, if not irreconcilable with the precise theological meaning of transubstantiation, is wholly different from what that term is commonly taken to imply. But they will be bringing their doctrine of the Eucharist into harmony with the general principle by which we claim the whole universe as sacramental. Charges of magic or of idolatry will only lie when the outward is identified with the inward, that is when the very nature of a sacrament is denied ; or when its effect is regarded as automatic and independent of the faith of the recipient. Where there is the conviction that through these effectual signs the Spirit of Christ, His life and very self, is bestowed upon us, and we are incor-

[1] Cf. *Christus Veritas*, pp. 247 ff.

porated into the God-filled organism which is His body, the details of definition are matters on which there may well be legitimate room for divergence.

The causes of error are after all obvious enough. We can exaggerate the external, which, just because it is "outward and visible," obtrudes itself upon us, offering easy means of testing conformity and enforcing discipline. That way lies the success that can be measured by statistics, the efficiency beloved of practical people, the happy sense of regimented power, the delight in our own pet creation, a machine. Or in revolt against the tyranny of cut-and-dried rules, against means which pose as ends, we may reject the outward altogether and deny that it has any place in religion. So to act is to plunge into anarchy and asceticism, to decry the natural order in favour of an ethereal other-worldliness, or more often to set up for ourselves an organization to take the place of what we have rejected. The student of the religious life of Britain will recognize both these tendencies as illustrated by the recent movements in his own or any other denomination. On the one hand we have a wide and multiform revolt against institutions of all sorts, appealing powerfully to the mystical and prophetic elements in the churches, and revealed both by the growth of free experiment within the body and by the existence of a mass of individuals and groups which, while enthusiastically Christian, yet refuse all sectarian attachments. On the other there is the strong reaction of those dismayed by the ineffectiveness or bewildered by the individualism of the "free" Christian, a reaction which accounts for the converts to Rome and the strength

of a rigid Catholicism or a still more rigid bibliolatry. Neither extreme has any future. They will give place to a presentation of the faith which will be at once Catholic and Evangelical, sacramental but not idolatrous, ordered but as an organism not as a machine. And the day of that synthesis is near.

For despite the caution and timidities of those in authority and the apathy of masses of their followers, the vision of the Great Church possesses an ever-increasing hold upon the religious consciousness of mankind. *Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia* is only inadequate if it implies that the Body of Christ need have no organic existence ; that the Spirit can be manifested in fullness apart from the fellowship of the faithful ; that religion is solely a matter for the individual in isolation. We are coming to realize not only that the ultimate test of Churchmanship is the evidence of life in Christ, of personal union in Him with God, but also that for the development of such life membership in the beloved community should involve a full sharing in the corporate activities of His body, and that to this end a universally recognized ministry and a norm of doctrine and discipline are evidently desirable. We dare not exclude from the Church those who find through other ministries and other sacraments than ours their means to spiritual growth : we shall deplore the failure of our own presentation of the faith to satisfy their needs : and we shall labour so to interpret and if necessary reform our institutional life as to make it fully expressive of the manifold riches of the Spirit of God. To assume that we have already in some one of the denominational systems a mode which can completely embody the

fullness of Christ is to profess ourselves able to comprehend the measure of His stature. As we learn to know the wonder of His universal appeal, we shall realize that all creeds and ceremonies, customs and cults, are at best partial and inadequate translations of certain aspects of His glory. As we set His revelation against the majestic background of the natural universe and relate it to the discoveries of the scientists, we shall recover a sense of our own limitations, and a knowledge of the extent to which we distort and obstruct the working of His Spirit. We shall in fact be set free from the dangers of presumption, from the belief that God can be confined within a neat and satisfactory scheme, from the arrogance which essays to measure the Eternal with the reed of a man. And we shall lose our willingness to condemn and exclude ; and in humility and patience shall consecrate ourselves so to live personally and corporately that with every fibre of our being, every thought and every activity, we may fulfil our calling as "workers together with God."

We have too often been tempted to think of the Church as a spiritual Army and Navy Stores from which necessaries and luxuries could be procured by those who comply with its rules of membership. God cannot be parcelled out in this way : nor is the Church just an agent for the supply of His gifts. Rather it is His family, to which all mankind in its manifold levels of attainment and aspiration already potentially belongs : His Spirit operates in them all wherever men feel the presence of the divine or manifest the birthright of beauty and truth and goodness which is His image : and it is the business

of the Christian to bring his brethren to a fuller realization and a richer use of their privileges, to assist them by special means of communion, personal and corporate, so that the family life may be worthy of the Father. In so doing they will find their Catholic heritage of supreme value, just in proportion as they treat it as a means to a state not yet fully attained, and are great enough to use it humbly and not exclusively, as the expression of a living relationship not as a code of legal ordinances. Church and Sacraments should be the broad highway into the Kingdom, a way hallowed by Christ Himself and a multitude of His followers. It is a way to discovery and adventure—a way, not a trimly-walled garden nor a prison however commodious—a way along which mankind may travel in its journey home to God. To lay it down wide and plain, repairing the damage that previous errors and present wilfulness have inflicted, and prospecting its further reaches where only the saints have trodden it, is our task. When once we are sure of the goal and sure too of the vast stretches which separate us at present from it, we shall approach our task in a spirit which demands constructive labour and confident comradeship : we shall see our formularies and traditions not as fences but as finger-posts : and we shall find a vast multitude of those whom our arrogance has repelled ready to join us with enthusiasm and hope. Mankind will be upon the march. Their goal is God ; and the way is not merely Church and Sacraments but Christ Himself.

VIII

THE NATURE AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

By Professor Arthur S. Peake, D.D.,
The University of Manchester

THE problem of the authority to be recognized in Scripture has become urgent for the Christian Church only within the last half-century. Up to that time the Bible was regarded as the immediate utterance of the Holy Ghost, accurate beyond all dispute in matters of history, infallible in all its pronouncements on faith and morals, on science and philosophy. This position is still widely held, and many who would no longer consciously identify themselves with it are still unconsciously entangled in its implications. But it must be abandoned for a new and less vulnerable fortress. The challenge to the Christian religion itself inevitably involves a challenge to its classical documents ; but these are exposed to perils peculiar to themselves. The Copernican theory which reduced our planet to a mere speck of stellar dust ; geology with its proof of the vast antiquity of the earth ; the theory of evolution, with its obliteration or attenuation of the gulf between mankind and the lower creation, its blow to the argument from design, and its apparent incompatibility

with the doctrine of the Fall ; archæological research with its demonstration of the antiquity of man ; anthropology and comparative religion—all of these influences have profoundly affected the authority of Scripture. But the dispassionate investigation of the Book itself has brought other difficulties to light. The history of the Canon shows that we can draw no clear-cut division between books which were and books which were not accepted as inspired and canonical. The study of Lower Criticism reveals widespread corruption in the text and grave uncertainty as to the right choice between rival readings in many passages. Exegesis provides innumerable instances in which the sense is ambiguous and divergence of interpretation is inevitable. Higher Criticism has proved very disquieting. Works once held for unities are now regarded as composite. Traditional dates and ascription to definite authors have frequently been abandoned. The results of historical criticism have been even more ominous. The sources are believed to vary considerably in historical trustworthiness, and the narratives are in several instances thought to fall short when judged by modern standards of historical accuracy. Questions perhaps even more momentous are raised by Biblical Theology with its reconstruction of different and possibly inconsistent types of doctrine.

Such, then, are the causes which have created the widespread uncertainty in the attitude to the Bible. Some of them depend for their disquieting effect on the view of revelation held. It is obvious that where the whole text of Scripture in its original form is regarded as the immediate utterance of the Holy

Spirit, the difficulties enumerated will be much more formidable than where a more elastic doctrine of inspiration is accepted and the human factor is allowed a real place and function. But in either case the problem of the authority of Scripture is raised in an acute form.

Our best approach to a consideration of the problem will be made by an inquiry into the actual nature of Scripture. For the difficulties occasioned by modern investigation derive much of their cogency from untested conceptions of the object and real character of the Bible. We are not entitled to take over without examination theories of revelation which were formulated in antiquity by deduction from ready-made principles rather than from close and detailed scrutiny of the facts. We may not lay down beforehand the form which a Divine revelation should take, the medium through which it ought to be given, the goal towards which it must move, or the conditions which it may not fail to satisfy. If we insist on prejudging these matters we run the risk of missing the main purpose which the revelation was intended to serve, of forcing the phenomena into our wilfully selected moulds, and of creating gratuitous difficulties for those who realize that the actual revelation does not conform to the conditions which we have insisted that any true revelation must exemplify. Nothing can exonerate us from undertaking an investigation of Scripture for ourselves, not in order that we may illustrate and confirm our own ideas about it, but that we may discover what it really is.

If, then, dismissing from our minds the prejudices in which we have been educated, we ask ourselves

what we should expect to find in a revelation and then confront these natural anticipations with the Bible itself, we should realize with a shock of surprise that Scripture is far from satisfying the stipulations which we had formulated. If we assume that revelation is chiefly concerned with disclosing spiritual truth, which man is incompetent to discover for himself, if its function is to exhibit a true ideal of character and lay down right regulations for conduct, we can affirm that the Bible satisfies this definition only if preoccupation with our own preconceptions has blinded us to facts which would otherwise have stared us in the face. For were this an adequate definition of revelation, much that is included in the Bible would have no title to be there. If this view is pressed the inference is certain to be drawn that the Bible might with advantage be relieved of much of its contents and thus more completely answer to the true definition of a revelation. Suggestions for such an expurgation have in fact been made, coupled at times with the suggestion that the excluded material might be replaced by passages from other sacred books, chosen for their moral and spiritual value. Such an enterprise could never be seriously contemplated by anyone who had rightly apprehended the real nature of revelation or the actual significance of Scripture.

It is specially instructive that projects for trimming the Bible into a better shape usually fasten on the historical books of the Old Testament as excrescences which might with advantage be cut away. But it is just their inclusion in Scripture which provides us with one of the most valuable clues in our quest. The primary function of revelation is not to give us a

set of dogmatic propositions or moral principles. Had this been the Divine intention Scripture would have been constructed on completely different lines. It would have been far briefer, more systematic, more exact in statement, more abstract and didactic. Presumably the giving of it would not have been spread over so long a period, nor can we discern any reason why it should have been limited to a single race. The boundaries of the Canon would not have been left in uncertainty, the text would have been carefully safeguarded from error, the meaning would throughout have been lifted above dispute. But the Bible we actually possess is literature of quite another order. It is much more concrete, more unsystematic, less precise, much more voluminous. Its frontiers cannot be determined with certainty, its text is marked by multitudinous variants, its expression is often ambiguous, its meaning open to debate. It covers a long stretch of time and till it reaches the climax it is restricted to a people which seemed at the outset singularly unfitted for the part it was called to play.

The Bible is the record of a long historical process, and it is on this outstanding fact that we must concentrate our attention in any attempt to discover the right conception of revelation and the true significance of Scripture. Revelation is not and cannot be adequately conveyed through words. For it is not by formulæ, propositions, definitions, descriptions, that the self-disclosure of God can be most fully made. These are valuable in their place, but that place is secondary and not primary. The primary medium is life, not language. We see this most clearly at the

summit of the process when, for the fullest manifestation of God, the Incarnation of His only-begotten Son was necessary. It was not in the message Jesus proclaimed that His chief contribution to our knowledge of God was made, but in the whole fullness of His personality, His character, His action, His life and His death. The deepest and the loftiest things which Jesus said about God fell far short in richness, in intensity and in delicacy of that which He gave in being just what He was and doing just what He did. We know God in a far more intimate and vital way when we study Jesus, who was the exact counterpart of His Father, living under our human conditions, than when we listen to His words about God, incomparable though they were. He was Himself the eternal Word rendered into the speech of time. The greatest contribution He made to religion was Himself.

But this is only the supreme instance of the quality which dominated the whole process of revelation. Life was the medium selected by God through which He imparted Himself to His people and disclosed His nature and His purpose. History was the chosen field of the Spirit's action. In the life and fortunes of Israel God was Himself at work and through this action He displayed His character. Not only did His people come in this way to learn the truth about Him, they came into actual contact with God Himself. Their history was not simply an instrument through which God made Himself known, it was a means by which they entered into fellowship with Him. But a whole nation is too mixed in its composition, too poor in its quality, to serve for more than the rudimentary stages of revelation. It was therefore necessary that

for the more advanced stages of the process finer instruments should be employed. And so, great personalities were chosen for this function. History still remained the medium ; but personal history now took its place side by side with national history ; and thus the experience of the individual became the highest channel through which the Spirit carried on His work. So the revelation came to be more purely religious in character since it was more disentangled from the secular. It gained also immeasurably in quality. For now, in place of the rough and coarse instrument which was all that the nation could offer, the loftiest and most sensitive spirits were chosen to learn through their own experience the truth He desired to communicate. Thus the religion grew in richness and depth, in moral delicacy and spiritual sensitiveness, in the loftiness of its conception of God, in the intimacy of immediate fellowship with Him.

In all this it is presupposed that there was in the history and religion of Israel a direct action of God unique alike in quality and in degree. At the outset Israel seems to have been but little separated from her kinsfolk in religious insight or knowledge. That, starting from a similar level and with no loftier prospects, she should have reached the height attained by her great prophets, psalmists and sages, is convincing evidence that here the Spirit of God was active in a wholly exceptional way, the intensity of which we can estimate as we measure the distance between Israel's unpromising origins and her amazing achievement. But when God chose His method and medium of revelation He accepted the limitations which these involved. He took the people as they were—crude,

ignorant, unspiritual. He might by a miracle have flooded their religious darkness with Divine illumination, have transformed their character and lifted them to a high pitch of saintliness. But this is not His way ; for He seeks to train personality to a free and conscious choice rather than to force character and attainment upon it. Hence He gently stimulates the receptive soul, He increases the light as its growing brilliance can be borne. He is patient with dullness of apprehension, with crudeness of idea, with imperfection in conduct. He is content that the process of education should be slow, since He desires that the knowledge thus imparted shall be fully assimilated. Inasmuch as there is this interaction between the Divine and the human factors, and the Spirit lays restraint upon Himself that He may not overwhelm the human element but secure to it full freedom of response, we must be prepared for grave defects, especially in the earlier stages. Some imperfections were tolerated for " hardness of heart " ; religious institutions were inherited by the Hebrews from their ancestors or taken over from surrounding peoples, to be gradually purified and filled with a deeper meaning, till they were made obsolete by the revelation in Christ. That the literature in which this history is recorded should exhibit moral and religious limitations, a varying standard of conduct and of creed, ought not to surprise us. Nothing else indeed was to be expected. The slow upward movement is faithfully reflected in the record. That whatever falls short of the perfection of Christ is no model for us ought to be clear to every Christian. Had these defective elements been omitted, the Bible would have

been greatly impoverished, and we could not have gained that apprehension of a progressive revelation which it is the function of the Old Testament to convey to us. The imperfections of the Old Testament are accordingly no argument against the Divine character of the religion; they testify rather to a gracious condescension of God in taking His people as He found it and moulding the uncongenial material more and more to His mind.

The development of Israel's religion was no haphazard process; the movement was Divinely controlled and guided towards a goal contemplated from the first. In Jesus this goal was attained. Not that He was merely the outcome of Israel's development, the flower of His race. Not even Israel was competent to produce Him. But He came in the fullness of time, when the world was ready for Him; and He came as one of the Jewish people. It is in the light of the consummation that we must estimate the process which led up to it. It is only from the standpoint of the Gospel that the religion of Israel can be judged aright. The religion of Israel and Christianity, the Old Testament and the New, are in organic union. The whole process is one and indivisible. Christ's attitude to the Old Testament must always mean much for His followers; but more than His personal reverence for the literature is involved in what has been said. He was Himself conscious that He closed a great succession of God's messengers; though essentially He belonged to a category infinitely higher than that in which they stood. To Him the whole movement had been steadily ascending. From Him it derived its main significance.

In the light of what has been said it is possible to understand the part played in this process by the secular fortunes of Israel. Her international relationships were momentous for her religious development. She drew on the common heritage of the Semitic peoples. She was throughout her history in close contact with her kinsfolk, Edom, Moab and Ammon. Her roots were in Mesopotamia and Syria. Some at least of the tribes lived for a considerable period in Egypt. All the early Hebrews had their experience of the desert. After their settlement in Palestine they dwelt side by side with the earlier inhabitants, themselves of very mingled stock, and intermarried with them. The smaller neighbouring peoples—the Philistines, the Phœnicians and the Syrians—played a decisive part in their history as did the Great Powers, Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome. Their internal conditions, social, political and economic, also contributed largely to their moral and religious development. Religion was a different thing for the nomad or semi-nomad and for the man who had a fixed abode; for those who lived the pastoral life and those who had taken to agriculture; for those who had their abode in village or hamlet and those who were crowded into the cities and towns. The elimination of the yeomanry and peasantry, and the creation of large estates, cultivated by slave labour, are also factors to be reckoned with. Nor can the physical configuration of Palestine and the nature of its climate be neglected when we are estimating the forces which shaped directly or indirectly the growth of the religion.

The bearing of these general considerations will

become clearer and the sense of their significance more vivid if the salient features of the development are briefly indicated. The Religion of Israel took its rise in the great deliverance of the Hebrews from their bondage in Egypt, and their unification into a people which had taken Yahweh for its God. Their wonderful escape at the Red Sea and the awe-inspiring manifestations at Sinai assured them of the might of their God; it inspired them with a passionate gratitude, but also with wholesome dread of His unapproachable holiness. The settlement in Canaan and the gradual transition to the agricultural life transformed the religion. Yahweh remained the national God but, with the art of agriculture, the Hebrews learned from the Canaanites the worship of the local Baalim, on whose favour the fertility of the soil was thought to depend. Later this led to the worship of Yahweh, as the Giver of fertility, with rites introduced from the cult of the Baalim. The Rechabites protested against abandonment of the nomadic life for the settled life of agriculture on the ground that the latter was incompatible with their allegiance to the national God who was a wilderness Deity. Hosea denounced the Baal rites but, claiming agriculture for Yahweh, he reconciled civilization with the higher religion of Israel. In constant war the national consciousness was strengthened and the need for unity was more keenly felt; and since the chief bond of unity was the common worship of Yahweh political necessities deepened religious loyalty. The Philistine peril was apparently the occasion for the rise of Hebrew prophecy and it led to the creation of the monarchy. The triumph of David laid the

foundation of a Hebrew Empire with its capital in Jerusalem, where the Ark, the supreme medium on earth of Yahweh's Presence, was installed with corybantic enthusiasm. The peril of a new Oriental despotism, in which freedom would have been stifled and the cult degraded to a court religion, was averted by the folly of Rehoboam, which resulted in the division of the kingdom. The menace from Syria forced Israel into alliance with Tyre, and thus the cult of the Tyrian Baal, favoured by Ahab from motives of policy and by Jezebel from religious fanaticism, roused Elijah to his campaign for Yahweh as Israel's jealous God who would tolerate no companion or rival. The long war with Syria largely eliminated the yeomanry who were the strength of Israel. It created a wretched and oppressed proletariat who were oppressed by the grandees, swindled by the traders, and denied justice in the courts The triumph of Israel over Syria under Joash and Jeroboam II widened the bounds of the kingdom and poured great wealth into the country ; but it was absorbed by unscrupulous plutocrats and lavished on extravagant luxury. And now to the dispassionate observer Assyria began to loom large on the horizon. The great prophets of the eighth century, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, now appear upon the scene. Filled with loathing for the moral uncleanness of their people and with burning indignation at cruelty and wrong, they announce that Yahweh Himself has arisen on behalf of the defenceless and is summoning the Assyrians to execute an exemplary justice. No national repentance averted the doom. It was hastened by a political folly which the prophets attributed to the

judicial blindness inflicted by Yahweh on their rulers. So the Northern Kingdom fell and the chosen people was narrowed to Judah. That Judah was spared for nearly a century and a half was of supreme importance for the survival of the religion. The work of the eighth-century prophets had time to secure its permanent results; and when Judah fell and the people went to Babylon, the higher prophetic religion had become hardy enough to bear the shock of transplantation from Palestine. The Exile detached the people from the inveterate religious abuses which were associated with the Palestinian sanctuaries and thus at once purified the cultus and gave a chance for the ideals embodied in Deuteronomy to secure their permanent place in the religion. It led to the defection of large numbers of Jews, who could see in the downfall of Judah and the destruction of the Temple nothing but the defeat of Yahweh by the mightier gods of Babylon. But for others it vindicated the teaching of the great prophets who saw in Judah's calamities God's just judgment on their sins. In Babylon the Jews were thrown back on the more spiritual expressions of religion, since in an unclean land so much of its material consolations was denied them. Limited to their own resources and unable to waste their energies on political intrigue, they garnered the spiritual treasures of the past and prepared for the future. The downfall of Babylon gave them the opportunity to return and re-establish their commonwealth in Judæa under Persian suzerainty. Their relations with Persia affected their outlook on religion, perhaps less by positive contribution than by stimulus to explicit development of what their own

faith already implicitly possessed. Their national misfortunes were far from ended and they concentrated attention on the problem of suffering and the apparent injustice of God. The conquests of Alexander brought them into contact with Greek thought. The conflicts between his successors involved them in much misery, which culminated in the attempt of Antiochus Epiphanes to stamp out their religion. Prophecy passed gradually into Apocalyptic, which was an attempt to interpret the world-order and inspire the despairing people with new patience to bear their wrongs; since the darker grew the night, the nearer approached the sudden intervention of God for the vindication and the reign of His people.

Thus we see how point by point the development of the religion stood in the closest connexion with the secular history of the people. But this great principle receives an even more illustrious exemplification when we pass from the history of the nation to the experience of the individual. For the history of the religion is largely a transcript of the experience of towering personalities and of the lessons which they drew from it. As its fountain head we have Moses whose whole work in creating the nation and its religion rested on the conviction that Yahweh had chosen the Hebrew slaves from the brickfields of Egypt to be His people. His conception of Yahweh was the starting-point for the whole later development. His work was carried forward by others on whom it is not necessary to linger. But the great prophets illustrate in a signal degree the part played by experience as the medium of revelation. In

several instances a spiritual crisis gives a prophet the convictions which will dominate his whole work. He has a vision of God or he hears God's voice. The visions of Isaiah and Ezekiel are expressly described. In other instances we may divine the effects of a similar experience. Isaiah sees Yahweh exalted on His throne and hears the seraphim chanting His holiness and His glory. He realizes, as never before, the fatal uncleanness of himself and his people and the doom which must come on the impenitent nation. In the light of these convictions he judges the internal conditions of Israel and shapes through forty years his foreign policy. Ezekiel is similarly crushed by the thought of God's sovereignty and holiness. He works out a systematic theology and creates an apologetic controlled by this overpowering experience. But in other cases it was not so much a critical experience to be measured by moments; it was a long agony to be reckoned by years. In the tragedy of his wife's infidelity Hosea slowly learns to see a reflection of Israel's apostasy from Yahweh and in his own undying love for the offender and unconquerable hope for her reformation he sees mirrored Yahweh's inexhaustible love for Israel, His invincible patience, His certainty of her repentance. And Jeremiah became the prophet of the New Covenant because his isolation from his people, their failure to understand him, the bitter persecution to which he was a victim, the venomous hostility with which he was pursued, drove him continually to God. Thus he gradually came to realize that in fellowship with God the inmost essence of religion was to be found. The Psalms abound in expressions of personal religion,

characterized by great depth and inwardness. The poet of Job could not have written if his own faith had not been strained almost to breaking-point by calamity, and if he had not through a mystical experience risen above his torturing and unsolved problem into unclouded certainty of God Himself. In the New Testament the case of Paul provides a very striking illustration of the same principle. The Pauline theology had behind it the Old Testament, the contemporary Judaism, the teaching of Jesus, and some acquaintance, which may be easily overrated, with contemporary Gentile thought and religion. But for what is most distinctive we must seek an origin in his own spiritual history. His doctrines of sin, the flesh, and the law, were drawn from his pre-Christian experience; his doctrine of mystical union with Christ, in which the believer becomes a new creature, with a new status before God, a new character and a new destiny, was derived from his catastrophic experience on the road to Damascus. The Christian may naturally shrink from placing the teaching of our Lord in the same category; but we may surely say that this teaching sprang from the depths of His own religious life and His unique knowledge of God.

History and experience were thus the channels through which revelation was conveyed. But an interpretation was needed since their true significance might easily be obscured or entirely missed, unless Divinely gifted men made clear the truth they were designed to communicate. In Israel this function was fulfilled pre-eminently by the prophets, who read the meaning of the history because they

understood the purpose of God. But when the climax had come in God's only-begotten Son and through His work the task of redemption was complete, it might seem as if the story of His life and death was all that we needed to know. But no great personality can be adequately appreciated if we limit ourselves to his actual career. We need to trace the influence of his personality after his death, to discern the direction and measure the strength of the forces he set in motion. So the New Testament does not consist simply of the Gospels. The Pauline Epistles in particular are valuable because they supply that element of interpretation which the history imperatively requires. And a written record was needed in order that the knowledge of the revelation might be preserved. It would otherwise have suffered from an ever-accelerating process of degeneration. It would have been stifled under foreign accretions, mutilated by vital omissions, distorted by false proportions and the shifting of emphasis. For all time we can go back to the original record and recover for ourselves the truth as it was gradually revealed ; we can also retrace the process, whether in history or experience, through which it was first apprehended.

It is only in the light of the preceding discussion that we can approach the question of the authority of Scripture. Obviously we cannot claim that its writ must be allowed to run in every department of human activity and research. But if we confine its claim within the realm of faith and morals, it is still clear that no indiscriminate appeal to its authority can be allowed. The idea that a single self-consistent

system of truth lies behind its every word and that in all its parts we have the direct utterance of the Holy Spirit is quite inconsistent with the phenomena the Book presents. Such unity is not to be found in it. Yet a real unity is there. It is the unity of a great process initiated by God, controlled by Him throughout and guided to its culmination in Christ. It is accordingly all valuable in a sense which could not be affirmed of it when its worth was held to reside in its theological statements and its moral precepts. For this theory of Scripture committed those who held it either to crude, and even erroneous, theology and defective ethics, or to allegorical and other strained interpretations, or to the recognition that much which was in Scripture had really no right to be there. From the point of view adopted in this essay it is possible to recognize that, allowing for a certain fringe, the Bible may be accepted as a whole in which every part has its rightful place. To know and prize the Bible in bits is much less important than to know and prize it as a whole. It is, of course, true that Scripture is extraordinarily rich in passages which, taken by themselves, yield much instruction and inspiration ; but if this test is impartially applied there is much in Scripture which will not satisfy it. And yet these may be quite indispensable elements if we are concerned to understand and profit by Scripture as a whole.

If we are seeking for what is authoritative in doctrine or morals we must naturally turn first to the New Testament. And even here we may have to discriminate. It is rather in the great central affirmations than in those things which lie on the

circumference and are conditioned by the thought or practice of the time that we must seek for authoritative guidance. When we are dealing with the utterances of our Lord we must not forget that they were spoken in Aramaic and have come down to us in Greek, and that the possibility of inaccurate transmission or translation must not be ignored. Nor must we forget that the very limitations involved in the Incarnation may have affected at certain points the form or matter of His teaching. But this seems to have operated rather in outlying features than in its central elements. We should at any rate concentrate our attention in the first instance on His great central affirmations ; we shall find, if we do so, little difficulty with what lies on the circumference. And with these dominant convictions we shall discover that the rest of the New Testament and much of the loftiest elements in the Old Testament are as a whole in general agreement. But our reason for accepting them is not simply that they are found in Scripture or that they are guaranteed to us by the authority of prophet or apostle. There is a famous passage in the Westminster Confession which may be quoted at this point. After enumerating various arguments for the belief that Scripture is the word of God the writers continue : " Yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts." In other words, those whose heart and mind are illuminated by the Holy Spirit, recognize as they read the Bible that the same Spirit is speaking to them from its pages. We might also

add that the illuminated conscience and reason may at certain points recognize that the Spirit is *not* speaking. As a matter of fact, the creation of the Canon of Scripture illustrates the principle which I am expounding. The origin of the Canon of the Old Testament lies in almost complete obscurity, and in the case of the New Testament the all-important stage preliminary to official action has to be for the most part inferred. But we may affirm with much probability that the creation of the New Testament was largely due to unconscious selection by the collective consciousness of the Church. The conscious, official determination of the Canon of Christian writings, in the main did but ratify this earlier process of discrimination. The statement that the Church wrote the New Testament can scarcely seem anything but odd to the student of its origin. But we might say that the Church guarantees the New Testament. In other words, the Christian consciousness, individual and collective alike, instinctively recognizes the general fitness of the undisputed books to their place in the Canon. And on the whole a similar affirmation may be made with reference to the Old Testament, in which the best religious consciousness in Israel also recognized the Divine quality of the literature. The verdict of the Christian Church endorses this estimate. What gives its value to the Old Testament is not that it is the New Testament in a more diffuse and less transparent form; it is just the fact that it is not the New Testament but the preparation for it. The two are inextricably bound together. Apart from the Old Testament the New would be largely unintelligible; without

the New Testament the Old would miss its true completion.

Yet even when we consider the Old Testament by itself we are compelled to recognize the inestimable value of its contribution. It firmly united religion and morality which have among other peoples commonly been separated. It sternly condemned all idolatry ; it attained a very lofty and, on the whole, a worthy conception of God. It stood for monotheism, in which universalism was implicit. Its witness was indeed at this point weakened by its nationalism, which was finally responsible for its great refusal to surrender its exclusiveness and become a universal religion. It created a fine and profound type of personal religion. It trained the sense of sin and met it with the assurance of Divine forgiveness and grace. It was filled with an enthusiasm for social righteousness and a passionate hatred of cruelty, oppression and injustice.

In the New Testament all these precious qualities are retained but in a deeper and more inward form. The limitations of nationalism drop completely away ; in Christ all distinctions of race, culture, and even sex are cancelled. The relations between man and God move no longer in the sphere of works and merit ; they are lifted into the realm of grace and faith. Morality is no longer the studious conformity to a law imposed from without, it is the spontaneous expression of the indwelling Christ with whom, through mystical union, the spirit of the redeemed has become one. The Christian is free from the Law and therefore attains righteousness, since his life is lived on a supra-legal level. But the supreme advance

made by the New Testament is that revelation attains its perfect climax in the personality who perfectly exhibits the ideal of religion and morality and who by the redemption He achieved secured the forgiveness of sins, the power for a new life, the assurance of a blessed immortality.

The search for an infallible authority is a quest which must end in disappointment. At many points we are doomed to an unwelcome uncertainty. We may be greatly helped by the profound thinking of the theologians and the piercing insight of the mystics and the saints. But the Bible is the classic of our religion, itself the work of saints, mystics and theologians, and the only source from which our knowledge of Divine revelation and the central personality of our faith can be drawn. If authority lags behind our curiosity it is adequate for our legitimate needs.

IX

RACIAL AND INDIVIDUAL SIN

By F. R. Tennant, D.D.,
Trinity College, Cambridge

IN order to present a fresh exposition of the subject to be dealt with in this essay, I would set out by considering in turn the three factors by which the character and conduct of a person are conditioned: the soul itself, its racially mediated inheritance, and its social environment.

As the soul, or the abiding pure ego, is not, like its objects and perhaps its states and acts, immediately apprehended by itself, scepticism as to its actuality has been persistent ever since Hume gave it expression. Psychology without a soul, or without a subject, has been a desideratum with writers for whom economy in descriptive concepts has weighed more than adequacy; and the pure ego, often handsomely admitted by its repudiators to supply a natural and sufficient systematization of the observable facts, has been scouted as a redundancy and as a possibly fictitious entity transcending the perceivable. It is not possible to thresh out this issue here; but reasons may be briefly assigned for adhering to the view that the pure ego is no logical abstraction or class-name, no convenient epithet for the unifiedness of mental events

into one personal mind, but the one and only conceivable unifier that achieves the unification by actual process and accounts for the observable unity. It is fact that awareness exists, and that it involves a subject and object. At the level of self-consciousness, the former fact is presented; the subject is not presented as such, but consciousness involving the existent subject is presented. As the knowledge in question is discursive or reflective, not sense-like, it is not phenomenal. The pure ego of a momentary or minimal actual experience is therefore the one item of metaphysical or ontal knowledge that we most certainly possess. But if every successive mental event involves a subject, it seems equally certain that a person's mental life cannot be resolved into a series of lives, each owned by an evanescent subject that arrives as a bolt from the blue and absorbs the mentality of its predecessor. It is to marvel and mythology of this sort that the sceptic as to one abiding ego is inevitably committed. Were it true, there could be no retention or memory, comparison or ideation, and there would be no reason whatever for thoughts etc. occurring in that teleological order which they actually have, e.g. in a process of reasoning. The 'stream of consciousness,' without its abiding ego, would be no stream at all. In fact, "psychology without a soul" is but psychology that ignores the soul which it everywhere presupposes in order to get itself propounded.

As to the soul's existence, then, I shall assume that we may claim certainty. We may possess little knowledge as to its essence or nature; and considering how knowledge of its existence is mediated, that does not surprise us. But the same facts which involve its

existence are not wholly devoid of implication as to its nature. It is an agent—in numerous specific respects —and has changing states : whence feeling and conation, selective and synthetic operation. It must be individual in the sense of indivisible, a monad or spiritual atom ; its states and acts are not parts. It must be individual in the further sense that it alone can have its states, perform its acts, apprehend its immediate objects (which are not to be confounded with the objects of common or shared and conceptually elaborated experience) : these are its *idia.* There can be no talk of interpenetration, confluence etc., of pure egos, without bringing psychological science to chaos. Equally, souls cannot be " windowless " monads : i.e. without actual *rapport.* Again, each soul must have somewhat of idiosyncrasy, else there would be accounting for tastes : what kind of feeling is evoked in a subject by an object can depend, originally, on nothing but the subject's intrinsic nature.

Further than this we can say nothing as to the soul before its manifestation of itself in the gradual acquisition of personality after embodiment. But the fact last mentioned is of importance in connection with the superfluous controversy concerning the soul's freedom. For feeling, by which is here meant the capacity of being pleasantly or unpleasantly affected, determines desire or aversion, which in turn at the ideational level determines volition. In that feeling is soul-determined as well as externally evoked, and motives are constituted motives by subjective attitude, freedom in the sense of self-determination cannot possibly be gainsaid. The ultimate limit to

human freedom consists in the fact that the soul's intrinsic nature and responsiveness in feeling are posited for it, not by it : the soul is not a *causa sui*—a phrase which, taken literally, is nonsensical.

Short of this intrinsic capacity and latent faculty we have no warrant for ascribing to the soul before its embodiment any experience and developed activities, cognitional or conative, such as in this life it comes to possess. Ideation, volition, conscience, reason, have to be acquired. The soul does not manifest any reminiscence, synthesized disposition, innate ideas. Its incarnation *may* be accompanied by obliviscence or *kenosis* ; but this is mere supposition, groundless and indemonstrable. All speculation as to an ante-natal fall and the origination of sin in a previous existence, is thus but baseless fancy.

As to how the soul originates we know nothing. Theories, however, are forthcoming. The least tenable of these is traducianism. We cannot conceive, let alone reconcile with established fact, souls undergoing fission like an amœba, yet remaining essentially the same in functioning. We cannot conceive chips from old soul-blocks cohering to form a new pure ego. There should be no idiosyncrasy in a soul if it arose by generation. Continuity of soul-plasm is not observable fact, as is continuity from generation to generation of germ-plasm. The quasi-materialism of this theory makes it psychologically barbarous

The rival theory of creationism equally transcends knowable fact, but has the advantage of not being psychologically grotesque. *Prima facie* it is not so easy as traducianism to adapt to some of the facts of

heredity; and it does not satisfy our craving for continuity. But it accounts, as the other theory does not, for individual and original peculiarity. In order to bring it into line with biological heredity, Lotze supplemented it by what may be called an occasionalistic hypothesis, according to which God adapts the soul to its body and assigns it, so to say, foster-parents. This suggestion savours of *ὕστερον πρότερον*, and is unacceptable to many theists; certainly the divine besouling of bodies compelling mental insanity raises the problem of evil in acute form. Hence others would supplement creationism by the hypothesis of pre-existence, putting the creative act further back and leaving embodiment to the devolved or secondary causation of a "planted out" world.

How the soul comes to be embodied is as inscrutable a mystery to science as its origination. As we have no reason to believe that the soul, before association with an embryo, has knowledge of the potentialities of that embryo, we can no more assign to the soul responsibility for 'choice' of its particular inheritance than we can for its possession of a determinate as well as finite nature. "It is God that made us" organisms, if theism be true; "not we ourselves," on any theory. Man may have responsibility, but it is by no means unbounded.

We may pass now to the second factor determinative of moral personality: heredity.

To speak of mental heredity involves departure from the sense of 'mind' which is primary among its various meanings. Subjective acts and states cannot be transmitted: that is scarcely more than

an analytical proposition. The human subject is only called an heir because his mentality, on developing, resembles in many respects that of his forbears. As in jurisprudence, whence the notion of heredity is derived, so in psychology (but not in biology), the heir is distinct from his hereditament or property. Parents can transmit nothing but body-plasm, if the soul be not engendered. But the bodily characters handed on ready-made evoke subjective reaction and condition the functionings of the underived but embodied soul : it is so, in as far as we can know, that experience in this life begins. They preclude development of latent faculty along certain lines, predispose to development along others, and so contribute to render the soul a determinate self. Hence the semblance of heredity of the 'mental' in the narrower sense of subjective faculty and capacity, which are innate but not inherited. Mental heredity can only mean inheritance of an objective element in experience. More precisely, the hereditament synthesized for the heir by his ancestors is his body regarded as a medium (largely unperceived) for intercourse with the world and as instrumental in mediating presentations. Sex, with all its potency to condition mentality, is thus part of the heritage ; so are a few specialized instincts in the stricter sense of the word, and certain other dispositional tendencies called instinctive in a vaguer sense. The body is the source of more or less variable 'body-feeling' or cœnæsthesis, and consequently of appetites, impulses, aversions, emotional response, moods and temperament ; also of special aptitudes such as may (or may not) become organized into talents proper. Inasmuch

as cœnæsthesis, or internal bodily sensation, is conditioned not only by heredity but also by interaction between body and environment, it is impossible completely to distinguish in developed mentality epigenetic acquisitions from self-unfoldings of the innate or the inherited.

The individual's heritage, we have seen, is racially mediated. One's human nature in its bodily aspect is the ancestrally prescribed handicap with which each of us starts his earthly race. Appetites and various conational dispositions are entrenched in the self before the personal and moral status is acquired; and for that state of things we can have no responsibility. These inevitable propensities and promptings, the stock-tendencies which have been called *fomes peccati*, concupiscence, etc., and miscalled original sin, bespeak, from the biologist's point of view, no unnaturalness, abnormity or derangement. The theologian must admit that they belong to man as God has been pleased to make him—i.e. to the bodily nature that is what it is in virtue of man's descent from an infrahuman stock. They do not require the hypothesis of a fall from original righteousness, of a dislocation or corruption of human nature, or of a withdrawal of supernatural graces, to account for their presence or for their clamorous self-assertiveness throughout our earthly life. Being non-volitional, they cannot in themselves be correlated with guilt and responsibility, or be amenable to ethical valuation. Essentially non-moral, they are also neutral in respect of what volition shall make out of them: they are the actual presuppositions of specific human virtues as well as of specific vices. It has been assumed, however, by no

less a philosopher than Kant, that they are morally evil; but apparently for no better reason than they had been wont to be accounted so. Kant consequently asserted that they are due to the individual will: yet in this life they are prior to the emergence of volition. Other theologians than Kant have postulated that each man became "the Adam of his own soul" in a previous life, thereby making what is called the 'universality' of sin incomprehensible and every man an incarnate devil. Kant himself resorted to the doctrine of a timeless activity of the soul; a notion to which few have taken kindly because of its obscurity if not self-contradictoriness. But it is more to the point that he, like S. T. Coleridge, Julius Müller and Mozley, who later set out from similar presuppositions, was compelled to confess that ultimately the origin of human sinfulness is inscrutable mystery.

It is no mystery at all, however, for the evolutionist who would reason from empirical facts and decline to entertain baseless suppositions of any kind. There is no dangerous abstractiveness in speaking of conative tendencies in isolation from volition, when the earliest years of human life are in question; for then there is no volitional attitude from which to isolate them. Sin cannot be said, therefore, to be in us at birth. "Universal" sinfulness is no absolute truth calling for a necessary or *a priori* ground, as Kant assumed, but a generalization from adult experience to which there are innumerable non-adult exceptions. There is no more need to postulate an evil bias of the will when it emerges, in order to account for a choice of evil, than there is to postulate a contrary bias to

account for our choice of what is ethically approved. Evolution accounts for the solidarity of the race in respect of universal possession of a nature that inevitably prompts to sin and to virtue, to egoism and to altruism. Here Augustinianism, or the doctrine of inherited tendency, was strong, Pelagianism hopelessly weak. But what is thus original and universal *ipso facto* cannot be sin. There is a stage of individual life during which there is neither will nor conscience : the inheritance is non-moral.

Further inquiry into the nature and origin of sin involves consideration of the third factor that we have already distinguished, viz. the individual's interaction with his social environment. Sin can only begin when the moral status has been acquired, and at birth we have it not. This assertion is apt to evoke the question, Are we to believe that the moral is evolved out of the non-moral ? And the putting of the question is often supposed to carry refutation of the possibility of introducing the idea of evolution into the sphere of morals. Evolution, however, is not eduction of the preformed ; it is " emergent," epigenetic, growth of what was not out of what was. A value-judgment is indeed not an existential judgment, and cannot be extracted from one ; nor is moral consciousness resolvable into feeling or desire any more than into intellection : it may none the less emerge from the compounding of them.

As a matter of fact, conscience is a social product, as also are the *mores* of which there can be wilful transgression. Conscience is not innate ; indeed we can see how it is thrust upon the individual when, through intercourse with his fellows, he is baptized

into the over-individual. He then acquires a new standpoint from which to evaluate his private desires and personal behaviour. To learn how others see us is to see ourselves as others see us: and that is *con*-science, the reflection of others' approval and disapproval in the contemplation of one's own conduct. The individual learns that actions etc. are expected of him and are owed by him as contribution to the common weal. The original oughtness is thus recognition of duty or debt. Volitional conformity with social conventions being demanded, and knowledge being forthcoming of a law that can be obeyed or slighted, the moral status is attained. From such merely jural conscience there is no imaginable derivation of the higher kind which appropriates the external law as also internal, and involves *spontaneous* subordination of private interest to common end. But genetic science is not here nonplussed. The human being does not enter into social life a pure egoist who somehow has to acquire inward approval of self-denial. When con*science* is thrust upon him he already knows sym*pathy*. The same sociality which gives the jural conscience involves also the goodwill, humaneness, "natural virtue," that is the spring of subsequent equity such as mere justice can never inspire. In the development of personality through acquaintance with others, 'identification with' others is involved as much as 'differentiation from' others. Some at least of the demands of the law meet the responsive pull of the individual's heart-strings; and so the development of conscience and ethical advance in general are provided for. Psychological continuity is traceable from the crudest external

morality to that which recognizes a categorical imperative and absolute values; and of course the advance is bound up with that of cognition, especially of abstract reasoning. The 'I owe' which is first acknowledged to contemporary society and the actual self can become transferred, as knowledge and insight grow, to the idealized or ideal self and society, or to God; ideals in ethics and religion are constructed just as they are in science and mathematics: by idealizing, and abstracting from, the actual. At last such intellective process eliminates both the law-giver and the I, and so the conception of abstract 'ought-ness-to-be' is reached. The unconditionality of ethical 'absolutes' is perhaps the more vividly believed by the plain man of moral aspiration when his moral consciousness is permeated by theistic religion.

It appears from what has been said that the higher characteristics of mankind are mediated by what is sometimes called social heredity rather than by heredity proper; by nurture as contrasted with nature. Of the several distinguishable preconditions of the existence of the moral status, and therefore of sin, we can ascribe to the social environment that of the actuality of the objective (i.e. common) ethical standard or moral law, of which sin is the falling short or the transgression. Sin is always transgression of law or falling short of standard. It needs, however, to be observed that the converse is not true. To judge so would be to mistake altogether the essential characteristic of the moral. It would be to confound sin with imperfection. It is not sufficient, in order that individual conduct be accounted immoral, that it can be pronounced by any human society to

be incompatible with their objective standard, or with an absolute (over-social) standard. The conduct must be capable of being seen by the individual himself, at the given time, to be inconsistent with a norm which he both knows and recognizes as binding on himself. In other words, conscience must be involved. A being such as an adult heathen, inevitably ignorant of Christian ethics, may be said to be non-moral with regard to Christian requirements, however enlightened he may be as to others less perfect. Christian laws have no dominion over him ; he is not accountable if he does not fulfil them ; it cannot be said of him, in the stricter sense of the ambiguous word 'ought' that he ought to satisfy them. Otherwise we should logically be required to attribute sin to the lower animals and even to physical things ; for the only difference between the non-moral and the moral that is here relevant is the capacity on the part of the moral and incapacity on the part of the non-moral agent for awareness that a given ethical principle is binding on himself.

Moral consciousness, then, in the sense of an agent's awareness at the time of his action that his act contravenes a law that he knows to be binding for his conscience, is the second essential condition of sinfulness. And this, too, is mediated, as we have seen, by social environment. It follows also that there cannot be one sole, absolute or unconditional standard, the falling short of which, in any conditions, convicts of sin. The only relevant standard is the highest which, before the all-seeing eye of God, it is possible for an agent to recognize. The standard will therefore differ for different individuals and

societies, and for the same individual or society at different stages of its moral progress. Sin cannot be treated merely from the point of view of objective ethics; development in favour with God and man must be pronounced by the Christian to be possibly sinless, though development is incompatible with static perfection.

The third condition of moral conduct in a finite and evolved creature such as man pertains to the conative rather than to the cognitive side of experience. No being can enjoy the moral status that has not the capacity of feeling and desire. There must be provision for being prompted to ends that can eventually be evaluated as higher and lower, otherwise there can be no volitional choice such as is essential to morality in a finite being; though he may, after years of self-discipline and pursuit of holiness, attain "the saint's rest" or immunity from many temptations and approximate more nearly to the ethical nature of God, who is without body or passions. But were such "calm" man's "birthright," he would not be man. For this temptability, the bodily inheritance provides condition; and in that it provides it for every man born of woman we need look no further for explanation of the fact which is only somewhat overstated in the phrase "the universality of sinfulness."

Whereas this explanation of the prevalence of sin —the element of truth in the old doctrine of original sin—is sufficient, it must be supplemented, though it cannot be replaced, by invoking the influence of social environment. For thereby standards of moral value are set for an individual's adoption, by which

his preference of the higher to the lower, or conversely, may be encouraged. Secondary or derived motives are thus brought to bear, into which the will of the environment, as well as non-moral propensities, has entered. In this case we may more correctly speak of sin being transmitted than in that of birth-heredity which mediates only non-moral tendencies. Force of example, propensity to imitation, power of convention and tradition, illustrate how evil communications may corrupt good manners. There is so much of truth in Schleiermacher's saying that "Sin is in each the work of all and in all the work of each." It was to this "social heredity" —which is not heredity at all—that Pelagius exclusively appealed in order to account for the propagation and prevalence of sinfulness; but it is hardly sufficient. Improved social influences may lessen crime; they do not extirpate it. Nor does wickedness appear exclusively in individuals whose moral surroundings are of the worser kind.

It is not necessary to emphasize the remaining essential condition of moral conduct, viz. volition, or rather intention (as our Lord taught), because in so far as sin proper, or actual sin, has been in view, no theologian has explicitly questioned it.[1] It is precisely because sin, in any sense that the concept may be consistently used throughout the field of Christian doctrine, is essentially the outcome of individual volition, that 'original sin' is a misnomer in which the word 'sin' is used metonymically. To possess

[1] For full consideration of this as of the other conditions revealed by modern psychology, the reader may be referred to my work *The Concept of Sin*.

appetites is not sinful; but to cherish desires for what conscience forbids, to imbue *all* impulses with volitional response, is to pass from temptation to evil act or habit. Nor is there need to dilate here upon the intricacy of the moral life or to pursue inquiry as to how, out of primary appetites, emotions, etc., the human person develops by volitional activity his complexity of moral character. The essentials for a sound psychology and doctrine of sin are manifested and can be most easily and clearly studied, in the elemental situations that have here been dealt with. It need but be observed further that among the primary data for constructing a concept and a doctrine of sin, we should be chary as to including what is called sin-consciousness or the immediate sense of sin-conviction and guilt. For this may on occasion be profound and yet be caused by objectively erroneous belief. There may be individual sense of guilt when there is actual guiltlessness: as when a person believes he has done something that actually he has not done, or attributes responsibility to himself when impartial judges would acquit him of it. And, of course, the opposite may happen. Hence the 'sense of sin' is too subjective and insecure a foundation for scientific doctrine; while the word 'immediate,' as applied to experience and associated with infallibility, is—as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere—disastrously ambiguous.

The definition of sin to which the foregoing discussion leads may now be stated thus: Sin is imperfect compliance in act or character issuing from volition with the ethical ideal in so far as that, in the sight of God, is capable of apprehension by the agent at

the time of the activity in question; that non-compliance being due to the free choice of ends of lower ethical worth when higher were possible. More briefly, sin is moral imperfection for which an agent is, in the sight of God, accountable. Sin, it should follow, is always a matter of individual volition; but the promptings to it, and the very existence of the law and the conscience that are conditions of it, are racially or socially mediated.

Social sin is thus both the child and the parent, in turn, of individual sin. Society is always what its members make it; the moralized individual person is partly moulded by society. Social sin will then only differ from individual sin in respect of certain characteristics such as are only emergent in virtue of intercourse between individuals; ultimately social sin is resolvable into individual sin. The common or social mind, the "soul of a people," the "mind of a nation," is not a mind or a soul in the sense in which the individual member is a soul and has a mind. There can be no such Mind, other than and over, yet like and of the same order as, the many individual minds: a constellation of five stars is not a sixth star. On the other hand a society is not an aggregate of non-communicating individuals: indeed the moral individual is a non-existent abstraction, in that personality, moral status, etc., are social products. Social or collective experience differs from such experience as would be possible to the isolated individual, not in respect of its being owned by one over-individual subject, but in respect of its standpoint and scope being the outcome of communication and interaction, and in respect of

all the extensions and enhancements and transcendings of the individual that are thereby attainable Thought thus becomes enriched, but all the thinking is performed by the individuals who give and take. What is common or is one, is neither the thinking nor the thinker, but the thought-product. So ' collective mind ' is but a name for a characteristic evinced by individual minds consequent on their co-operation. Souls do not coalesce into an over-soul. Society sins but in this, that, and another individual.

X

FORGIVENESS AND ATONEMENT

By Alfred E. Garvie, M.A., D.D.,
Principal, Hackney and New College, Hampstead

I

1. ALTHOUGH in Christianity religion and morality are so closely interwoven that they form one fabric of life, yet we may distinguish the one from the other. Morality is concerned with the *quality* of character and conduct, whether right or wrong, good or bad. Religion deals with what God is, and what man is, and their mutual relation. The standard by which quality of action is judged is either a law (as the word right or wrong indicates) or a good (as the word good or bad suggests). The good is wider than the law, as it includes all the varied interests of human personality; but the law is not merely a means towards the good as an end, but part of the good. In other words the *good* includes knowledge, art, etc., as well as morality, but morality is an essential element. Religion is part of the good also, but in religion the good is regarded as a divine gift; in morality as a human gain. As both are essential to the good, religion is a moral duty, and morality is a religious need. When the necessary interrelation of the two is recognized then obedience

to the moral law becomes a divine command, and acceptance of the religious good a human obligation. A man is imperfectly religious who is not moral, and conversely, although that is not so generally recognized, he is imperfectly moral who is not religious. To use our Lord's own words, the man does not love God absolutely who does not love his neighbour equally with himself; and he cannot have this equal love unless that absolute love is its source. Inseparable as religion and morality may be, they are still distinguishable.

2. If we are to conceive forgiveness, and atonement in the distinctively Christian way, we must consider sin from the religious, no less than from the moral, point of view. In our moral judgment on a man either of blame or praise we must take into account his knowledge of the moral standard. A man can be blamed only for failing to be what he himself knows he ought to be. His moral accountability is proportionate to his moral enlightenment. In our religious judgment of sin we must, however, advance beyond this. As in religion we are concerned with the mutual relation of God and man, our standard of judgment must be not only what a man *knows* he ought to be, but what God wills that he should be. The older theology set up an eternal divine law of righteousness as the standard for the judgment of human sin. The theology of to-day thinks rather of a temporal divine purpose of good for man, expressive of the eternal nature of God as holy love. For we are abandoning the *static*, and are substituting the *dynamic* conception of God. We need not, however, surrender the conviction that

there is an eternal divine law of righteousness, and that its realization in human morality is included in the divine purpose. Of this divine law the moral law, by which we morally judge men, is an expression, progressively apprehended by the human conscience. The revelation of God in Christ discloses the divine purpose, the communion of love with man which God seeks, and the conformity to His holiness that He desires of man ; and this supplies the standard by which man's sin is to be judged religiously, not to apportion his personal blameworthiness, but to estimate the need of each man and of all mankind of the salvation from sin which divine grace offers.

3. A man might be personally blameless ; and yet from this standpoint a sinner, because not living in loving communion with God, nor in conformity with this holiness of God. This view is implied in St. Paul's statement that " all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God " (Rom. iii. 23), which may mean either that " all mankind as sinful has failed to gain God's approval, and instead lies under His condemnation," or " that man has failed to attain to any share in the personal perfection of God for which he was destined." While the context supports the first interpretation, the common usage of the term glory in the New Testament favours the second.[1] It is the second which for us is significant. Without now raising the question of origins, about which we can only make conjectures, we may affirm that mankind, alike in racial evolution as in individual development, has " missed the mark." Not only is individual conduct or character defective, but so also are man's

[1] See Romans in *Century Bible*, p. 126.

moral standards and social institutions, judged by the divine purpose. In the measure in which that purpose is disclosed is the range of sin widened to include distrust of God's love as well as disobedience of God's law. It may even be that the only *eternal* sin (St. Mark iii. 29) is the unbelief which refuses the grace that saves from sin. Man's need of forgiveness and atonement is to be measured not from the moral, but the religious view as to the nature and extent of sin.

II

1. If this be the Christian conception of sin, what must forgiveness include? Men have often been more concerned about the consequences, present or future, of sin than about sin itself. More men have been troubled about the disapproval of their own consciences than distressed about the judgment of God on their sin; and yet the former is the subjective estimate only, and the latter alone is the objective; and the consequences must be proportionate to the objective and not the subjective estimate. Where there has been concern for the divine judgment, apprehension has often been disproportionately directed towards the future consequences, the reward of goodness in heaven, or the penalty of wickedness in hell. And preachers have often pictured the joys of heaven and the pains of hell to induce sinners to amend their ways. For most hearers to-day the allurements of heaven and the terrors of hell have ceased to be effective motives. And that is well. It is the relation to God, as it is effected by sin, on which attention should be fixed; for it is a change

in that relation which forgiveness effects, and a change in that relation will affect the consequences

It must not be assumed, however, that all the consequences are necessarily removed at once by forgiveness. A forgiven man may still suffer the ill-health which vice may have brought upon him; he may not recover the reputation among his fellow-men that he has forfeited by wrong-doing; affection which he has estranged may not be restored to him; his former temptations may still remain a danger to him; his efforts after becoming better may be hampered by his weakness. But even if these consequences are not at once removed, he himself is so changed that he bears these consequences, not as penal, but as disciplinary, for the development of his moral character and even the increase of his religious experience. The difficulties and distresses of the new life, due to the old, may enable him to prove more fully the sufficiency of the grace of Christ. Not only so, but the consequences themselves may be mitigated, if not altogether removed. The *mens sana* may enable him to recover his *corpus sanum*. When the reality of the change in him has been proved, he may recover his good name and his former friends; and the strength of Christ may be so perfected in him that he will be more than conqueror in the struggle against former habits. In most cases, this not only may, but will be. As regards the hereafter, hope will spring out of faith, and love cast out fear. Reconciled to God a man becomes reconciled to the world and life, his fellows and himself. The peace of God prevails over all the other discords of the lot of man.

"All things work together for good to *the man* who loves God" (Rom. viii. 28); because he has the assurance that there is nothing real or even imagined that can separate him from "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (*v.* 39). Even if the consequences of former sin are not all at once removed, the man becomes a new creation, old things pass away, and all things become new (2 Cor. v. 17).

2. Forgiveness is essentially *the cancelling of the guilt of sin.* When a man sins, he has the sense of guilt; that does not mean merely that he knows he is liable to incur the consequences of sin; it means, where there is any belief in God, that he is conscious that God's disapproval or displeasure rests upon him. This sense of guilt is sometimes represented as only subjective in the mind of the sinner, and not objective in the mind of God. This, however, is to make the moral and religious consciousness of man deceptive. If no reality corresponds to the sense of guilt, there is no certainty that any reality corresponds to the sense of forgiveness. Man's moral and religious consciousness does not lie. If there be any moral affinity between God and man, we may infer that God, as morally perfect, reacts, and necessarily reacts against sin in condemnation. Sin is evil, and only evil, in His sight. So long as the sinner remains impenitent, does not himself condemn his own sin, and so morally separate himself from it, he and his sin constitute an indivisible moral unity, and God's condemnation of his sin must fall on him also. His personality, however, is not exhausted in his sin, and is not so completely identified with his sin, that God's judgment of him can be only condemnation. He has

still a personal value for God; God sees in him a moral promise yet unfulfilled and not a final abandonment of himself to sin, and so God can love him, while hating his sin. He can be willing his salvation from the sin for which he is now condemned.

The moral possibility of hating the sin and loving the sinner is sometimes denied. Where the hate of the sin assumes the unworthy form of personal resentment, there is this impossibility. But even human love can make the distinction between the act and the agent. A good mother may recognize the unworthiness of a son, whose worth she cherishes in the belief and hope that he may be restored to worthiness. So is it with God, only perfectly, as in even the best mother imperfectly. As soon as the sinner by repentance condemns his sin, and so separates himself from it, this moral unity which involved his condemnation by God is dissolved, and he can be restored to the divine favour. As by repentance he detaches himself from sin, and by faith attaches himself to God, the personal communion with God is restored. This is what forgiveness means. While the condemnation on the sin remains, God *gives away* the condemnation from the penitent, as he is no longer one with his sin. He is no longer held morally accountable for it by God, as he has himself repudiated it. *His guilt is cancelled*; and accordingly his sense of guilt may without any self-deception cease. There is mutual reconciliation of God and man, for the personal relation is altered both for God and man. The disapproval which must fall in God's judgment on the sinner, so long as he cleaves to his sin, can now become the satisfaction

of the Father in the child who was lost and has been found. The sinner's distrust of and estrangement from God, resulting from his sense of guilt, is changed into the joy of forgiveness, the peace of God. Because the relation of God and man is mutual, forgiveness means much for God as well as for man.

3. Love means fellowship, the interchange of life, the intercourse of mind with mind, the identity of purpose.

(*a*) When by forgiveness the restraint on love which the condemnation of sin in the object of the love imposes is removed, then the personal relation of God and man is restored. It is well to use the word *restored*, not meaning by its use that either the race or the individual at one time possessed this relation, as it is now constituted, and forfeited it by sin, for we are not now indulging in any conjectures about origins ; but that this is the end for which man was created by God, although he has " missed his mark." " *Cor nostrum inquietum est, donec requiescat in Te.*" These words of Augustine express man's actuality apart from God, and his destiny in God. The Heavenly Father rejoices in the recovery of His lost son, and the earthly child rejoices in his return to the Father's house. This communion of God with man means for man, love, joy, peace, comfort, hope, blessedness. It is passing out of darkness into God's marvellous light. It is rising out of the death of sin into the life in God. With the mediation of this personal relation by Christ we shall deal in the next section ; by the mediation there is secured an intimacy of personal relations between God and man, unexcelled by any visions or voices of the mystic. God and man cannot come into more close

fellowship than in the divine grace which forgives and the human faith which claims that forgiveness. God and man cannot be more closely united to one another than in this reconciliation.

(*b*) This communion with God in the religious experience issues and must issue in conformity to the purpose, which expresses the nature of God, in moral character. "Shall two walk together except they have agreed?" (Amos iii. 3). A man does not love God unless he loves his fellow-men: and love is the fulfilling of the law. The emotional rapture in God can never be accepted as a substitute for the moral capture by God. Faith is not completed in belief and trust, but in surrender, as a complete psychic process includes impression, affection, and expression. Works are not to be added on to faith, but are its fruit. The earthly child is to become perfect as the Heavenly Father is (Matt. v. 48): and that perfection is His mercy (Luke vi. 36). We must distinguish two conceptions of the human perfection thus required, a *static quantitive*, and a *dynamic qualitative*. It is not primarily to resemblance to God's nature by imitation to which the believer is called, but to acceptance of God's purpose by co-operation with it. God's eternal nature as holy love is expressed in His temporal purpose as Father, but it is with the purpose that man is brought into immediate contact. It is the enthusiasm and energy with which a man co-operates in that purpose that is more important for his future development than even the virtues and excellencies which he now displays in his character. Many of these may be due to nature and to nurture more than to grace; and another man who at the

start of the Christian life is much more imperfect in moral character may hold out greater promise because of the zeal and force with which he submits himself to that purpose in his life and conduct.

The single-minded and whole-hearted acceptance of this purpose as the necessary condition of a progressive conformity to God's perfection involves a new standard, a new motive, and a new power. The new standard is indicated in the condition added to one of the petitions in the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. vi. 12), and the explanation given: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (*vv.* 14, 15). There is nothing arbitrary in this connection; it is inevitable. A man can neither repent of his own sin, nor exercise faith in God, so as to be forgiven, who thus refuses to regard and deal with sin as God Himself does. The motive of forgiveness is love, the method of forgiveness is grace, the cost of forgiveness is sacrifice; and that is the standard set for the forgiven life. A man must do to others, not only as he would have others do to him, but as God in forgiving him has done unto him. The moral character must correspond to the religious experience. This is not a lower and easier standard than that of the law, and grace does not annul, but fulfils law. Not only does love not do any ill to a neighbour, but it does all the good it can. The demands of Calvary are much more exacting than the commands of Sinai, for love dares to ask what law would never be able to claim.

The new standard is not a cruel mockery of man's weakness, only because with the new standard comes a new motive. "We love, because He first loved us" (1 John iv. 19). "The love of Christ constraineth us: because we thus judge that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 14, 15). "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20). In these words of the Apostle we have anticipated what must be discussed in the next section; but it is impossible to speak of the new motive of the Christian life without reference to the expression of the love of God in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and especially His Cross. It is in this sacrifice that the forgiveness of sin comes to man finally and perfectly, and no motive can be so constraining as the love of Christ shown in His Cross. One of the greatest sermons of the great Scottish preacher Thomas Chalmers was on the subject of "the expulsive power of a new affection." But this is only the negative aspect of the constraint of Christ's love; its positive aspect might be expressed in the phrase—"the impulsive power of a new affection." The love of Christ fills up no less, nay more, than it casts out.

The motive, constraining as it is, is accompanied by a new power, for in this new life man is not limited to human resources. In the measure in which a man accepts the new standard, and surrenders to the new motive, does he gain command over divine resources. Where the law of Christ is fulfilled, and the love of

Christ constrains, Christ, the risen, living and reigning Saviour and Lord, lives by His Spirit. The believer, according to his faith in Christ, is filled with the Holy Spirit, the enthusiasm and the energy of new life. Because of this ennobling power the yoke of the new life is easy and the burden light ; for the believer can say with Augustine, "*Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis.*"

To some readers it may appear as if the writer in what precedes had gone beyond the limits of the subject under consideration—forgiveness—and had been dealing with holiness. But the separation of the one subject from the other, even in theological discussion, has had lamentable results. Even in the Epistle to the Romans the danger of misunderstanding due to such a separation is seen. After having dealt in five chapters with justification by faith without any reference to sanctification, Paul is forced to encounter the objection : "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ?" (vi. 1). He meets it by showing that the faith which justifies is so intimate a personal relation to Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Lord, that it results and must result in a death to sin and a life unto God. No man is really forgiven unless he is put in such an attitude to sin on the one hand and to God on the other, that in promise and potency he has passed out of the death in sin unto the life in God. Forgiveness is a sham unless there are the beginnings of holiness, for God the searcher of hearts knows whether the real sacrifice of a contrite heart and a consecrated life has been brought unto Him. It seems a mistake, however, to say that God forgives us for the sake of what we are going to

become, for that conditions Divine Grace by human merit, and is a disguised relapse to legalism. What should be said is that as God's forgiveness comes to man in Christ and His Cross, it is the potency of grace, received in faith, which is the guarantee that the good work once begun will be carried to its perfect completion. Forgiveness as imparted in Christ offers no encouragement to moral laxity, but is the standard, motive and power of holiness, conformity to the moral perfection of God.

III

The forgiveness with which we are now concerned comes to men in Christ. The Atonement which is in His sacrifice is not the condition of the possibility of God's forgiveness, but the conveyance of the reality of that forgiveness. We put forgiveness and Atonement in too external relations to one another, when we think that Christ's death made forgiveness possible to God instead of regarding it as making forgiveness real in the relation of God and man ; for the objective history of the Cross is ever being reproduced in the subjective experience of the believer, and the grace which the believer receives in faith is atoning grace. But before this statement can be fully discussed, it is necessary to deal with two errors in the treatment of the doctrine in the past, the correction of which will lead us to the proper standpoint. In the first place it is an error to separate the earthly ministry and the heavenly reign of Christ from the Cross and to confine what is called His work to His Cross. In the second place it is an error to oppose to one another the subjective and the objective

relations of the Atonement, or what Christ does on God, and what He does on man, as the distinction has sometimes been crudely stated. What we must insist on is the unity and continuity of the one work of the whole Christ ; and also that as the end of that work is the fulfilment of the promise of man's affinity to God, as made in God's image, in the realization of the community of God and man in the common life of love, the divine aspect and the human aspect of that one work are complementary, and not opposed.

1. There has been a tendency to lay stress either on the Incarnation or the Atonement ; the one we may describe as the Athanasian, and the other as the Anselmic tendency ; or we may distinguish them as the sacramental or the evangelical. As the life of Jesus had its consummation in His death and rising again, we may assert that the full significance of the Incarnation is only disclosed in the Atonement. All that God as man can mean is shown when as man He tastes death for every man. The *Kenosis* or self-emptying is completed in the obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross, and that Kenosis must not be detached from the *plerosis* or self-fulfilment in the Resurrection. No theory of the Atonement can be adequate therefore which identifies the work of Christ with His death or separates that work from His Person. What He was, gave its incalculable value to what He did, suffered, and achieved.

(*a*) The reality of God as Father which He revealed, and the ideal for man which He realized as Son in His teaching and example must be fully taken into account in any conception we form of the nature and the purpose of His sacrifice. The perfection of His

moral character and the absoluteness of His religious consciousness makes His death mean infinitely more than the death of even the best of men. His judgment upon sin and His grace towards sinners indicate what is His contrasted, and yet not opposed relation to sin and to the sinner. His limitations of knowledge, His liability to temptation, His subjection to emotion, His sympathy with sorrow, His sensitiveness to pain disclosed in His earthly life, are all factors in bringing about His agony in Gethsemane and His desolation on the Cross. Much which has been written about the Atonement would never have been written had theological abstractions not been substituted for historical realities, had the approach been by psychological interpretation and not metaphysical speculation. May we dare thus to draw near to the Cross ?

(*b*) It is an exaggeration to say that Jesus was born and lived only that He might die ; yet His death has a place in His consciousness of His vocation such as it has not had in the life of any other man. Not Paul alone made it central. Without turning aside from the main argument to discuss when He first came so to regard His vocation, it is certain that at least after Cæsarea Philippi, Jesus regarded His sacrifice as the fulfilment, and not the frustration of His work for God. About two of his sayings regarding the purpose of His Death there can be no doubt: " The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many " (Matt. xx. 28). " This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many " (Mark xiv. 24). Even if the phrase in Matthew (xxvi. 28), " unto remission of sins," is a later gloss, it is a legitimate

explanation, as what Jesus had in view was the new covenant of Jeremiah xxxi. 33, 34—a reference which Paul makes explicit in his account of the Last Supper in 1 Corinthians xi. 25—of which the forgiveness of sins was one of the blessings. With thoughts of redemption, reconciliation, and probably even of propitiation if the reference to blood involves as much (cf. Rom. iii. 25), Jesus approached His death.

The agony of Gethsemane anticipated the dereliction of the Cross. What He shrank from was not the physical event, but the personal experience of desolation, as expressed in the cry: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Mark xv. 34). Are we not warranted in assuming that He regarded death as "the wages of sin" (Rom. vi. 23) which He was receiving, even as He "tasted death for every man"? (Heb. ii. 9). As son of God, knowing, loving, and obeying the Father, He judged sin as God judges it, as deserving the doom of death, as separation from God. As Son of Man, in love, mercy, and grace making Himself one with sinful mankind, He endured, though sinless, the consequences of sin. Love identifies itself with the loved and substitutes itself for the loved; and thus it was possible for Jesus in His love of God and man both to approve God's judgment on sin and to endure the consequences of sin with man for man. Although as sinless He must not be spoken of as vicariously punished or even penitent—terms that can apply only to the guilty—yet as far as the sinless may (and is that not more than the sinful can?) He endured and approved sin's doom of death. So far I venture to believe our interpretation of the facts recorded in the Gospels

allows us to go These records do not enable us to answer the further question: Why was this sacrifice necessary?

Without attempting to expound Paul's representations of *redemption* and *reconciliation*, the essential significance of which has already been discussed in what has been said about forgiveness, one of his statements about propitiation deserves a brief reference: "God set forth Christ Jesus *propitiatory*, through faith, by His blood, to show His *righteousness*, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing of his *righteousness* at the present season, that he might himself be *righteous*, and *reckon righteous* him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). I have italicized the essential words in this statement. God's passing over of sins in former times in His forbearance, and His forgiveness of sinners who believe in Christ at the present season, throw some doubt on, seem to challenge the character of God as *righteous*, so Paul argues. That character must be vindicated; and this was for Paul achieved in the sacrifice of Christ as *propitiatory*, for here the righteousness which judges and the grace which forgives sin are harmonized. It would be a gross misrepresentation to assume that Paul thought of vengeful feelings in God as appeased; but we cannot escape the conviction that he did think of God's hate of sin and love of sinners as made one in Him and declared to the world in the divine act by which Christ is set forth propitiatory. Why there must be this conjunction of righteousness and grace, and how this conjunction is effected in the sacrifice of Christ,

he does not tell us ; and he may not himself have felt the need to inquire, as sacrifice was for him a familiar fact.

(*c*) Before we attempt an answer to these questions the description of the work of Christ must be completed. Had there been no resurrection, the death of Jesus, if recorded at all, would have been regarded as a heroic martyrdom at best, or as a deserved fate of blasphemy at worst ; and there would have been no Christian Church to exalt His name above every other name. On the belief in the Resurrection, the fact of which historical criticism has not disproved, the Christian Church is built ; and without the presence and activity of the Living Lord it would speedily cease to be. For Jesus Himself the Resurrection was significant ; the assurance of it enabled Him to " endure the Cross, despising shame " (Heb. xii. 2), and for Him also the continuance of His work in the world depended on His continued presence and activity in His Church. For the completeness of the Atonement His continuance is essential. The love of God still comes to men in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and faith receives and responds to a living Lord. " He died unto sin once, but the life that He liveth He liveth unto God " (Rom. vi. 10). The physical event with its psychic consequents cannot, and need not be repeated ; but the redemptive, reconciling and even propitiatory activity of God in Him is perpetual. God is in Christ ever judging sin and forgiving sinners and is suffering with and for sinful mankind. To use the figurative language of Scripture, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. xiii. 8) is still in the

midst of the throne (v. 6) ; and there He ever liveth to make intercession (Heb. vii. 25).

2. We may, although this has been denied, distinguish between the fact and the theory of the Atonement. The fact is on the one hand what Christ experienced on the Cross, and on the other what the believer experiences as he exercises faith in Him as Saviour and Lord. The theory is the explanation offered of the necessity of, and efficacy for, the Atonement of the Cross.

(*a*) While the ecumenical creeds have defined the dogma of the person of Christ, the theory of the Atonement has no such general authority behind it. The Reformed and Lutheran Confessions are agreed in regarding the death as a penal substitution ; but there has been a constant revolt against that view. There is no other doctrine of primary importance in which there have been so great, not only differences, but even antagonisms. The doctrine has often been so crudely stated as to lend itself easily to caricature ; and opponents of evangelicalism have not shrunk from making ridicule of these imperfect attempts to disclose the contents of the Christian Holy of Holies.

It has been usual to classify theories as objective and subjective, although the Scripture teaching has prevented any theory being entirely the one or the other. The thesis in the objective theories is that the death of Christ is to be interpreted by theology primarily in relation to God, whatever its effects on man may be. The antithesis in the subjective theories is that it is with the influence on man that we are mainly concerned. It seems to me, however, that this opposition is wrong, and that we must aim

at a synthesis, for the opposition of the two aspects betrays a false point of view, a contrast between God and man which in this doctrine more than in any other will lead astray. From this standpoint we must retrace our steps.

(*b*) Sin is the disturbance and may prove the destruction of the personal relation of God and man. In forgiveness man is restored to this personal relation, to community with God, and conformity to God. Atonement is the divine activity in suffering and doing by which forgiveness is conveyed. Does not this whole relation between God and man assert an affinity between God and man without which community with and conformity to God by man would be inconceivable? Forgiveness is complete, only as man thinks, feels, and wills concerning sin as God does. The end of the Atonement must be so to disclose the mind, the heart, the will of God concerning sin and sinners, that the believer will be of one mind, one heart, and one will with God. The death of Christ affects man savingly only as man receives from it what God conveys by it. The necessity for the death of Christ is not to be sought merely in the influence it exerts on man in bringing him to repentance and faith; nor yet merely in its influence on God in bringing Him to grace and forgiveness; and in the statement of the second alternative there is an inherent falsity. The Cross may change man, it cannot change God. To speak even of Christ's action on God is in my judgment to speak irreverently, for God was in "Christ (and His Cross) reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19), and "God set forth Christ propitiatory" (Rom. iii.

25). It is a necessity inherent in the eternal perfection of God that He should express His judgment on sin in the very act by which He conveys His forgiveness ; and that that judgment should be expressed not in inflicting the penalty on sinners, but in sharing the consequences of sin with them. The impressiveness of the Cross for man is to be measured by the disclosure it makes to him of this necessity for God. If God must suffer to save from sin, does not that express more convincingly than any suffering of sinners this necessity of God's judgment on the sin He forgives ? That necessity cannot be proved by any logical demonstration, as many theories of the Atonement have erringly tried to do ; it is a moral intuition that responds to the challenge of man's conscience in the Cross. If Jesus Himself learned that necessity on His knees (cf. Matt. xxvi. 39 and 42), how otherwise can we hope to learn it except in contrition and adoration at His Cross ? A human analogy may help us a little. A good man may sometimes be content to be misunderstood ; but there are occasions when a moral necessity is laid upon him to vindicate his character, to show that he does not condone, and cannot compromise with sin. May we dare to say that such a necessity rests on God ?

(*c*) Whether our thought can make such a venture or not, of this we can be sure, only as Christ lives in us can we come to understand at all why He died for us ; only as in Him we find forgiveness can we make atonement at all credible. Only as we are crucified to sin and raised again to newness of life in Him can we glory in His Cross, and His Throne, His sovereign

Saviourhood. It is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, because given by the Father through the Son, who by enlightening, quickening, and renewing our inner life will make the presence of Christ as Saviour and Lord real for us, will make His truth intelligible to us, and His grace effective in us. The love of God forgiving, through the grace of Christ atoning, becomes ours in the common possession of the Spirit cleansing and hallowing.

XI

ETERNAL LIFE

By Canon Vernon F. Storr

THE first thought, and for many people the main thought, suggested by the word Immortality is that of endless continuance. If it is asked, what continues ? the answer is that the human person who has passed from this earthly scene lives on elsewhere. There are forms of the belief in immortality which do not include this element of personal survival, but it is safe to affirm that mankind is not really interested in any immortality which does not mean that persons survive as selves possessing a real continuity of being, recognized as such, between the various stages of their existence. But though the survival of personality, with its social and ethical implications, is included in any adequate doctrine of immortality, the emphasis in the popular mind is on the thought of continuance. So long, however, as we give the primary place to the idea of an endless going on, we shall never reach any satisfying creed about the future life. Endlessness has no ethical quality ; it can hardly be called a qualitative conception ; nor can we form any real idea of it. And the thought of an endless existence repels rather than attracts us.

Who would care to live on for ever in his present condition? Tithonus asked for immortality, but was soon forced to say, "Take back thy gift," because of the utter weariness which oppressed him, and because of the intolerable contrast between his own static existence and the dawn's recurrent renewals and fresh, creative energies. The fact that the traditional conception of heaven includes the idea of freedom from pain and sorrow proves that men are not finally content to rest in the thought of bare continuance.

Immortality in Hebrew Thought

In the development of Hebrew thought about a future life we have a striking example of how a primitive conception of immortality as a going on was, with the deepening of reflection and the growth of religious experience, superseded by a more satisfying creed. The belief in Sheol was no part of the specific revelation given to Israel. It belonged to their traditional ethnic religion, and has close parallels in other faiths. It was a crude creed of mere survival. Life in Sheol was hardly worthy of the name of life. In that shadowy underworld men, it was believed, lived on as thin ghosts or phantoms of their former selves, but existence there had no joy, or hope, or vitality. Sheol was pictured as "the land of darkness and of the shadow of death; a land of thick darkness, as darkness itself; a land of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." [1] The advice of the writer of *Ecclesiastes* is, "live joyfully with the wife whom

[1] Job x. 21, 22.

thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity . . . for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." [1] The saddest feature about life in Sheol was that God was not there. Its inhabitants were cut off from all fellowship with God. No psalm of praise could rise from those spectral lips; no prayer could ever be uttered, or, if it were uttered, could ever reach the ear of God. Thus Hezekiah in his hymn of thanks to God for recovery from sickness says—" for the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth." [2]

It is one of the standing wonders of the religion of the Old Testament that the flame of faith in God was able to burn so brightly, while the outlook into the future was so gloomy. We have no space here to trace the growth of a richer expectation among the Hebrews. More than one line of advance can be distinguished. But the main cause of the change was a deepening sense of the spiritual worth of the individual, and of what was involved in the fact that man was a being capable of fellowship with God. Not by the road of logical speculation was a more satisfying belief reached, but by the wrestling of the soul with itself as, confronted with the destruction of the national life and the disappearance of the established system of worship, it was forced to come face to face with God. Here and there, even while the traditional doctrine of Sheol held sway, gleams of a

[1] Eccles. ix. 9, 10. [2] Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

nobler conception of the future had appeared. The heart, treasuring the fact of communion with God, and craving for a continuance of that communion, cried out passionately against a creed which made no provision for the permanence of this fellowship. Was not man made in the divine image? Had not God called man into fellowship with Himself? Would it not be a defeat of the divine purpose if death had this severing power? Two things were seen to be at stake: the character of God, and the significance of man as a spiritual being. These same two things form the core of our modern argument for survival. A change has come over our manner of presenting the proofs of immortality. The older, speculative and somewhat abstract mode of argument, based upon the nature of the soul as substance, as simple and therefore indestructible in essence, which was in fashion in earlier days, and was a legacy from Platonic thought, has been seen to be inadequate. It was severely handled by Kant. To-day we have given up the attempt to demonstrate survival by reasoning of a rigid, logical kind, and content ourselves with showing that without a belief in human immortality it is impossible to maintain the rationality of the universe; or explain the presence of the spiritual values summed up as Truth, Beauty, Goodness; or justify the place of personality as the culmination of an evolutionary process, which we cannot help interpreting as having teleological significance. The argument for survival is cumulative. Many lines are seen to converge to a point, which itself lies beyond our present ken. But if the point of meeting were not there, we feel that we should

have no reasonable explanation of the convergence of the lines.

Eternal Life and Personal Survival

In contrast with immortality conceived as survival stands the doctrine of Eternal Life. In place of the quantitative thought of a mere going on is set the qualitative thought of a life which satisfies the cravings and aspirations of man's spiritual nature. Some have argued that a belief in eternal life does not necessarily include belief in the survival of personality; that it is possible to realize eternal life in the present; and that the essence of such realization consists in the sinking of individuality in something larger, so that the true destiny of the individual is ultimate absorption into the divine. In point of fact this presentation of the meaning of eternal life is frequently offered as an alternative to the belief in personal immortality. But such a creed is open to the following serious criticisms. It fails to take account of the fact that the advance of individuality is written large over the evolutionary process. The individual increasingly comes to his own; lower stages of individuality lead on to the advent of man who can say "I am I." If there is no survival of the self-conscious, human individual, why was there this travail of the centuries to produce him? Secondly, it is not a true account of the meaning of eternal life to say that it is realized in proportion as the individual loses his individuality in something larger. He who loses his life in a wider whole finds it. What he finds is a self, his own self, purified, enriched, ennobled. The doctrine of ultimate absorp-

tion in God is the negation of all the values which we attach to personality. It has been suggested that it is the outcome of a false view of soul, which regards each soul as consisting of a piece of soul-substance, temporarily detached from the general mass of soul-substance, and hereafter to be kneaded up with it again.[1] Thirdly, though it is true that we can in measure have eternal life here and now, can it seriously be maintained that earthly life gives adequate scope for the development of man's spiritual capacities? Those who here have most fully entered into eternal life are the first to confess that the little which they have achieved loses most of its significance, if it is not to be regarded as a prophecy of completer achievement hereafter. One of the strongest arguments for survival has always been derived from the fact of the incompleteness of man's earthly life. Fourthly, though man has attained to an individuality higher than that of any creature below him in the scale of creation, he is still in the making. Personality is an ideal rather than a full-orbed achievement. A man's self is a dynamic whole of interests, ideals, purposes. His life is pre-eminently one of conation. His reach always exceeds his grasp; he is perpetually creative. Death finds him a being with powers undeveloped; seeing visions of a beyond, where he feels that he might, if opportunity were granted him, become a much richer and more unified self. Is absorption in the divine, with loss of this growing individuality, a reasonable destiny for such a being?

We cannot too strongly stress the fact that the spiritual values of Truth, Beauty, Goodness, which

[1] Cf. Pringle-Pattison's *The Idea of Immortality*, p. 162.

we all recognize, and recognize as ultimate values (if a man does not admit them to be ultimate, you cannot argue with him), have meaning and existence only for a consciousness. Moral goodness does not float about in the air as an abstraction. It is the goodness of a personal will. So it is with Truth and Beauty. They are what they are, only by being thought or perceived. Because they are ultimate values and have meaning only for a consciousness, the theist sees in them the expression of the nature of God, whom he is unable to describe in terms lower than personal. God is the ground of these values. What appear to us as ideals after which we have to strive are eternally realized in Him. When we pass from God to man we see that a parallel argument holds good. These values are the values of the person who apprehends them, and continually re-creates them in his own life. Apart from the human will and consciousness they are nothing. "When the fight begins within himself a man's worth something"; the value lies in the will striving to make the ideal its own, seeking to identify itself with the divine purpose. But if this be so, must not the survival of the value carry with it the survival of the person who sustains and creates the value? How can we reasonably believe that the ultimate nature of reality is such that values will be conserved, and yet refuse to believe that such conservation will include the survival of personality?

The Meaning of Eternal Life

What, now, is meant by eternal life? Can the conception be more definitely characterized? The

following would seem to be some of the constituent features of the idea: [1]

(*a*) Eternal life implies the realization in the midst of an earthly life of change and vicissitude of some permanent centre of rest and calm. The craving of the human heart for such a centre is well expressed in the words of the familiar hymn:

> "Change and decay in all around I see,
> O Thou, who changest not, abide with me."

(*b*) It includes the presence of that which can give satisfaction to man's deepest spiritual needs and aspirations, together with the assurance that the human ideals, which take colour from the existence of ultimate spiritual values, are not mere day-dreams, but are part of the very texture of reality and are eternally realized in God.

(*c*) Eternal life seems to involve the conception of a life lived in all its completeness, where no values are excluded from realization, where personality develops to its full stature.

(*d*) Though we cannot obliterate the sense of time, our apprehension of eternal life lifts us above the time-sequence to this extent, that we recognize time as simply the abstract form, pictured as a succession of moments, of a growing, concrete experience, in which the past melts into the present and the present swells out into the future. The thought of mere succession passes, as Bergson has insisted, into that of duration; the latter implying that the past is always carried over into the present as a living in-

[1] I have derived some suggestions from von Hügel's *Eternal Life*.

fluence. The dweller in eternal life has passed beyond time, in that what interests him is the increasing enrichment of a concrete, living personality which he envisages as a whole. He lives in time, but each moment of his life has its value, is the point at which he can be his true self. One moment is for him never a mere means to the next, but an opportunity for creating an eternal value. "Being made perfect in a little while he fulfilled long years"—so runs the record of one who in time had grasped eternity.[1]

(*e*) The concept of eternal life is most richly defined in Christian theism. Lower forms of the concept, Spinoza's, for example, or Schleiermacher's, are not without real worth. But only in Christianity is a presentation of eternal life given which does justice to man's highest thought both about God and himself. Here eternal life is an experience of God in living contact with human personality. God gives to man of His fullness in proportion to man's capacity to receive the gift; invites man to fellowship with Himself, pours His love upon him, makes known to him His Presence, holds out before him the prospect of a more satisfying communion hereafter. Christianity sets high value upon the human individual, and, instead of offering absorption into deity as his destiny, tempts him with the prize of perfected sonship. It is sometimes said that the Christian hope of eternal life is selfish. Nothing could be more untrue. What is open to one individual is open to another. Spiritual values are not decreased by being shared. It is of the essence of Christian

[1] Wisdom iv. 13.

teaching that we are members one of another, and that the highest goods are won only through love and self-sacrifice. Is there anything selfish in the wish to grow in character, or to see truth hereafter with undimmed eye? The man who, desiring eternal life, concentrates all his attention upon his own soul, defeats his own object. He will find his true self and God only by the road of service to humanity and devotion to the ideal for its own sake.

Eternal life, as thus defined, is both a present possession and a hope for the future. Being the life of God in the soul, its presence is the pledge of its continuance, and the prophecy of its future enrichment. What limits can we place to man's knowledge of God and fellowship with God? In the New Testament eternal life is set forth as something both present and future; [1] but in the Fourth Gospel the emphasis is upon the view that man can have it here and now: "He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life." [2] The passages in the Johannine writings in which the expression occurs are interpreted in various ways by the commentators, but there is general agreement that it covers such ideas as the following: a spiritual union with God by which man is enabled to rise to the true heights of his being; the reception of a gift of life from Christ the Life-Giver, which lifts man to a new

[1] Mark x. 30, Luke xviii. 30.

[2] John v. 24; cf. vi. 47, 54. The Fourth Gospel, however, does not limit eternal life to a present possession. The references to "the last day" in vi. 40, 54, clearly imply that the present possession is something which is to grow to completion hereafter.

level of moral and spiritual attainment and effects a harmony in his personality; the appropriation by man of what the revelation of God in Jesus Christ means, so that man's life wins a new dynamic, and moves upward and onward into fresh experiences of the love and goodness of God.[1]

Evolution and Immortality

The problem of man's immortality takes us into regions of argument which lie beyond the confines of physical science. Science can neither prove nor disprove immortality. In this dispute the final verdict lies with philosophy and theology. Yet the teaching of science cannot be neglected. Indirectly science may have much to say which throws light upon the problem. Let us now turn to evolutionary science, and see whether it can provide us with any material which may be of help in our investigation.

Sixty-seven years ago (1859) Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, the book which first made the conception of evolution common property. This period has witnessed a remarkable change in our

[1] Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, pp. 217, 218, describes eternal life as follows: "It is a life which, with all its fullness and all its potencies, is *now*; a life which extends beyond the limits of the individual, and preserves, completes, crowns individuality by placing the parts in connection with the whole; a life which satisfies while it quickens aspiration; a life which is seen, as we regard it patiently, to be capable of conquering, reconciling, uniting the rebellious, discordant, broken elements of being on which we look and which we bear about with us; a life which gives unity to the constituent parts and to the complex whole, which brings together heaven and earth, which offers the sum of existence in one thought."

attitude towards that conception. The doctrine of evolution was at first thought to be destructive of spiritual values. Man, who held himself to be in many ways distinct from the animal creation, was brought by evolutionary science into the naturalistic scheme. His prerogative vanished ; his animal ancestry proved that he was but an animal with a veneer of civilization. The theory of Natural Selection seemed to destroy entirely the time-honoured argument from design. God was banished from His universe, and His place was taken by natural law, which in the last resort meant a mechanical system. Criticism, however, and reflection have shown that the doctrine of evolution is not the destructive agent it was at first thought to be. Indeed it is not untrue to say, that it lends itself more naturally to an interpretation in which spiritual values win an increased significance. This is surely so when we regard the evolutionary process as a whole, and seek for its meaning in the end reached by it, and in the continuous advance to that end. The beginning, we assume, was lifeless matter in a diffused gaseous state ; the end is spiritual man, whose presence casts a light backward upon all the earlier stages which led up to his advent, and invests them with new dignity. Origin is no criterion of worth. Origin may mean a beginning in time, or ultimate origin, in the sense of cause or ground. If by origin we mean that which came first in time in the historical series, then my present value as a person is not affected by the fact that once this planet was a ball of gas. If we use origin in the sense of ultimate cause or ground, then evolution has nothing to do with origins. Evolution is a descriptive term.

Evolutionary science aims at mapping out the course which the development of our earth has in fact followed. But why was there any development at all? What is the power behind the process, which controls the process? Why has the process the spiritual significance for our minds which it undoubtedly possesses?

In his re-valuation of evolution the following are the points upon which the theist lays stress. He insists upon the teleological character of the whole evolutionary process, with its ordered sequence of stages culminating in the advent of self-conscious, spiritual beings. The argument from design in its older form was left reeling on the field under the attack of Kant's criticism; it received its death-blow from the theory of Natural Selection. But the larger teleology has survived all assaults. The human mind will never be persuaded that no scheme of purpose underlies the course taken by evolution. Process implies end; it is more than a sequence of happenings; it is a directed sequence; each stage in it is prophetic of the next, the whole movement being progressively significant. The theist also, as we have seen, points out that the question, How? is not the same as the question, Why? If we are seeking for a reasonable explanation of the strange history of this earth, we must go far enough back. We cannot begin where physical science, which is not concerned with metaphysics, begins. We must pass behind historical evolution to some ultimate ground of the universe and all its changes. Where can an adequate ground be discovered except in a creative mind and will? A third feature in our re-valuation is our insistence

that the evolutionary process is perpetually creative of new and richer values. New kinds emerge in the course of the development, which cannot be explained by the categories which seemed adequate for the explanation of the lower stages. Life is a higher value than the inorganic. The world was a richer and more significant place when moral and self-conscious beings appeared upon it. Evolution is productive of what Lotze calls "an increasing series of results." It is these new values which arrest our attention, and we decline to have them set aside as mere by-products of a mechanical system. In them we see the growing fulfilment of the immanent purpose of the whole.

The Rise of Individuality

Written large over the face of Nature is the advance towards increased individuality. It is not easy to define what is meant by an individual. In the sphere of the inorganic we fail to discover any existences which possess those qualities of permanence and wholeness which we associate with the idea of individuality. As Professor Simpson says in his *Man and the Attainment of Immortality*: "With its energetic interpretation of matter, modern physics has abstracted such a character as essential being from the material world. The atom is no longer true to its name ; [1] the electron is a statistical unit whose mass may vary with its velocity. In its practical account of atom and electron alike, in terms of energy, modern physics furnishes us with discrete

[1] The atom = etymologically that which cannot be cut or divided.

particles of such regularity of size and uniformity of value that any one may take the place of any other, and in any mass of them, one portion has identical intrinsic properties with any other portion. To the divisibility of matter, so far as we know, there is no theoretical limit." [1]

In the organic world the individual begins to emerge. Organisms possess a unity which no inorganic thing possesses. The parts of an organism are intrinsically related to each other and to the whole; the life of the whole is in each of the parts. And living things maintain their form. Even the lowest of them appears to be a centre of selective interest and conation. But here again the difficulty of determining what we mean by an individual at once reveals itself. Where is the individuality in an unicellular organism which becomes two daughter cells by a process of simple fission; or in a "colonial" form, where a colony of cells, each with its specialized function, is integrated into a whole? From any piece of a fresh-water *Hydra* which we may cut off, a new and complete Hydra will grow. The power of regeneration diminishes as you ascend the scale of life; where it exists at its fullest, it raises in acute form this problem of the meaning of individuality. The facts show that individuality is a developing thing. The highest form of it which we know is the unity of self-consciousness. A person is an individual to an extent reached by no lower form of existence. Yet even a person is not a complete individual. We do not come into the world with a ready-made individuality. Personal life is a process of growth

[1] p. 198.

towards fuller individualism. None of us attain to complete individuality here ; and some lives, which lack central purpose and effort, seem to show the reverse process of a disintegration of personality. As we survey the mounting scale of life we see that the criterion of individuality is spiritual. The life of the lowest organism reveals the presence of a spiritual factor because, in however limited a degree, conation and selection are at work. This spiritual factor increases in significance until it becomes the distinguishing feature of personal life, whose true meaning, we feel, is bound up with the creation and conservation of spiritual values. Now, is all this travail of spirituality to bear no fruit in a future life ? The values created by us in pursuit of our ideals are personal values ; the highest purpose of human life is the identification of ourselves in thought and will with these values, the transmutation of them into character, the appropriation by means of them of the life of God. But how incomplete is our achievement here ! Is there to be a sudden arrest of our striving after truer personality ? Is the prophecy of completer development, which each carries within himself, to have only the meagre fulfilment which this life renders possible ?

Purposive Evolution

Evolution then, we judge, is directed towards an end. It reveals a broad line of purpose. The main purpose is there, even though retrogressions and lateral dispersions are part of the total scheme. In God's creation there are degrees of value. " They also serve who only stand and wait." The presence of

vast numbers of unprogressive forms of life, side-tracked as it were from the central line of advance, helps to accentuate the fact of progress. Advance has been made possible by the emergence at the right moment of the significant variation. Why does that occur? Is it a matter of chance? Is organic variability indefinite? Can we say that the variations which all organisms display are accidental, in the sense that there is nothing to determine them in one direction rather than another? The Darwinian theory of Natural Selection was an attempt to explain the adaptation of organism to environment by a self-acting, mechanical process. Organisms varied without purpose; it was a mere matter of chance whether the variations were such that they enabled their possessor to adapt himself to his environment. Forms which happened to vary in a suitable direction survived; those which did not perished. There is no design, but only, as Huxley put it, a method of "trial and error worked by unintelligent agents." "For the teleologist an organism exists, because it was made for the conditions in which it is found: for the Darwinian an organism exists, because, out of many of its kind, it is the only one which has been able to persist in the conditions in which it is found." [1] Biologists since Darwin's day have made an increasing study of variability. They have found that variations are not always small in extent; but that large variations frequently occur; more frequently than was apparent from the evidence available in Darwin's day. Whether, as some maintain, species

[1] *Darwiniana:* Essay on "Criticisms on the Origin of Species," p. 84.

owe their origin to discontinuous variations of this kind which suddenly emerge, is an open question. The evidence of fact in favour of such a view is very small. We have still to confess ignorance as to the causes which produce variability ; but proof is accumulating that modifications take place in definite directions. Natural Selection still operates, but the raw material given to it is not a mass of indiscriminate variations occurring in every direction, but determinate variations anticipatory of certain definite lines of evolution. It is an obvious fact that at given points in the evolutionary process significant variations emerged. The variations, for example, which made possible the advent of animals with backbones, we cannot but call significant, because the backbone is the foundation of the human physical structure. In other words, the course of evolution appears to be preordained in its large outlines.

Recent embryological investigation confirms this opinion. Sir Arthur Keith, in the Huxley Lecture delivered by him in 1923,[1] adduces a mass of evidence to show that we must postulate the existence of some principle or method of regulation and control, if we are to explain how the countless cells which make up an organism combine in the process of its growth to produce the required result. We need not invoke the aid of the exploded theory of a vital force ; Sir Arthur Keith suggests an alternative hypothesis. The important point about this system of control is that it operates with the future in view. It is con-

[1] Printed as a Supplement to *Nature*, August 18, 1923. I am indebted to the Archbishop of Armagh for telling me of this lecture.

cerned with the bringing about of something which is to be ; and this future end is often a very remote end. For example, we are given evidence in this lecture to show that those features of man's physical frame which are distinctively human, and are the basis on which his personal life is built, were made ready countless years before man himself appeared upon the scene. They appeared in ante-natal fashion in the embryos of that stock from which both man and the anthropoid apes sprang. We cannot of course examine that perished stock, but we can examine the embryos of anthropoid apes. When we do this, we discover that specifically human characteristics are found in the embryonic stages of the anthropoid which correspond to the embryonic stages of man. Among such characteristics are the skin without hair, the large brain, the slender neck, a downward curvature of the lower part of the skull in front, which makes possible the human face. These germinal, anticipatory, human structures did not develop in the period of the anthropoids, but they remained hidden, and were carried forward through successive generations, until the time was ripe for man to be born. " Thine eyes did see mine imperfect substance, and in thy book were all my members written, which day by day were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." [1]

A general view, then, of the course of evolution

[1] Ps. cxxxix. 16. The Archbishop of Armagh tells me that he has consulted several leading biologists, who agree that " evolution according to programme " is what the facts of embryology suggest. In a small book, *Science and Creation* (Longmans), Dr. D'Arcy has himself briefly summarized some of the main conclusions of this Huxley Lecture.

suggests to us that it is a planned course. We are purposeful beings ourselves, and we cannot help seeing purpose in this world. The convergence of the earlier stages of the process upon the production of man does not, of course, mean that everything is arranged for the benefit of man. God did not, as Paley hinted, put poisonous snakes in Africa to warn off intending settlers! Many other ends in addition to human ends may be served by the world. But we cannot deny that the result of the evolutionary process has been the emergence of persons; that we can trace a gradual leading up to personality; that persons seem to possess a peculiar spiritual value; that in this life they never attain to that full measure of personality of which we feel they are capable; that personality in its growth and achievement is prophetic of something more. Concede the existence of God as a Being, not less than personal, however much more than personal He may be; and in His character and purpose you have a trustworthy ground for believing that human persons will survive the shock of death. "Because I live, ye shall live also." Or, as Royce has put it: "If death is real at all, it is real in so far as it fulfils a purpose. But what purpose can be fulfilled by the ending of a life that is so far unfulfilled?"

Are All Immortal?

Are all men immortal? Or is there a winnowing process such as obtains in Nature? In the struggle for existence only those organisms survive to perpetuate their kind which have survival value. Natural selection among the variations which occur

preserves only those which enable their possessor to adapt himself to his surroundings. Do some human beings fail to reach that level of spiritual development which qualifies them to be heirs of eternal life? We have no adequate means of answering the question. We do not know, for example, when personality begins. If the child, who dies one minute after birth, is immortal, why is not the child immortal who dies one minute, or one month, or two months, before birth? Personality is not something given us ready-made. We have to create our personality. What we mean by a man's self is that personal centre of memories, hopes, desires, ideals, which he has fashioned out of his continually growing experience. In the purpose of God for humanity the production of moral character must play an important part; and it may be that there are human beings, whose life shows so little self-discipline or moral effort, whose appreciation of spiritual values is so small, that they may be held to have failed to reach that standard of personality which qualifies for survival. A common criticism brought against the doctrine of Conditional Immortality is that it bisects humanity into two distinct classes, those who survive, and those who do not; and thus does violence to the essential solidarity of man's constitution, which is the same in all men. But is this a fair criticism? Those who believe in Conditional Immortality do not say that some men are doomed from the first to annihilation. The possibility of becoming immortal is in every one; but some fail to make good their claim to a future life. We must leave the problem unsolved. Most of us would probably rather believe that in every

human being there is an inextinguishable spark of the divine; that man, when he really became man, was possessed of capacities which would ultimately be realized. "In my Father's house are many mansions." God may have training-grounds for immature souls. Can it be God's will that any of His human children should perish? Would not that be a confession of failure on the part of the Creator?

Soul and Body

Something must be said, in conclusion, about the meaning to be attached to the phrase "the immortality of the soul." What is soul? In popular thought the soul is conceived as a separate something, detachable from the body, in which it was imprisoned by God at birth. But there are insuperable difficulties in this mode of thinking. In the first place, there is an inheritance of spiritual qualities as well as of physical, which suggests that the birth of what we call soul is conditioned, at any rate in part, by heredity. In the second place, what is this soul which God implants? Clearly it is not anything ready-made. Soul grows as body grows, and the two are always in intimate connection. The whole process of growth is made possible by God, and so we may speak of the soul as God-given; but what is given at the start is the potentiality of soul rather than any complete, separable unit. Soul, surely, means that mysterious principle of regulation and control, which is the characteristic of life.[1] Wherever there are living organisms we find body, consisting of material

[1] Cf. Sir Oliver Lodge's *Man and the Universe*, pp. 155–75.

particles ; and some activity or energy which controls the body, orders its growth, preserves its symmetry, and gives individuality to the organism.

> "For of the soule the bodie forme doth take,
> For soule is forme and doth the bodie make."[1]

Soul has degrees ; there is an ascending scale of soul. There is soul in the Infusoria, because there is life, with that element of spontaneity and conation which all life shows ; but soul at this level has not the value which it has at a higher level. Soul ranges all the way from the activities of the single-celled organism to the master-mind of a great statesman, or the spirituality of the saint. Soul, as it develops, becomes in man personality ; but here, again, there is always growth, and the possibility of more perfect personality. Theology is wont to speak of man as a tripartite being, with body, soul, and spirit. But wherein lies the difference between spirit, and soul in its higher activities ? A careful study of the psychology of the New Testament does not confirm the traditional theological view of man's nature.[2] Nor can any strict dualism of body and soul be defended. The Greek believer in immortality spoke of the immortality of the soul partly because he held that matter was evil. The body was matter. Hence in the better life of the hereafter the soul would live uncontaminated by association with an evil body. Aristotle taught a more satisfactory doctrine of the relation of soul and body, seeing in the former the

[1] Spenser's *Hymn in Honour of Beautie.*

[2] Cf. H. Wheeler Robinson's article " Soul (Christian)," in Hastings' *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics.*

organizing principle of the latter ; but the influence of Plato determined in the main the Greek view of immortality. Christianity took over from Greek thought this idea of the immortality of the soul, but added to it the idea of the resurrection of the body, thus enforcing the doctrine of the survival of personality in its completeness. The view of soul presented in this essay helps us to a solution of the puzzles connected with the resurrection of the body. The body laid in the grave crumbles into dust. Its particles can never be recombined to form the same body ; nor is there any material germ which survives the dissolution of the body, out of which the new heavenly body will grow. There is, we believe, continuity of personal life between our existence here and our existence hereafter, but there is no survival of any particle of the corpse to be the starting-point of a new body. If soul here has the power of organizing the body through which its activity is expressed, may we not assume that it will possess the power hereafter of creating what we call our heavenly body ; or that it is doing it now, fashioning now, albeit invisibly, some less gross bodily organization to be its future instrument of self-expression ?

Evolution blurs the lines of distinction we have been in the past accustomed to draw. In the development of human personality what confronts us is a continuous process from a minute cell to the mature man, a process in which there are no breaks or sharp divisions. In that process personality gradually emerges ; and in our hands is left the making or marring of ourselves. Personality comes into being as the result of the union of soul and body ; or as it may

be more correctly stated, of the organizing activity of soul on body. Experience shows no example of soul existing apart from body, or of living body without soul. If we persist in starting with the dualism of soul and body, treating soul as something altogether apart from body, we find ourselves confronted with the problem of explaining how the two are interrelated, a problem which no psychology has ever been able to solve.[1] It is far better to start from the facts of experience. What we experience is a single, indivisible, growing whole, which is in part material, in part spiritual. In this whole primacy belongs to the spiritual element. The matter of which the body is composed is perpetually changing; soul is continually fashioning for itself a new body. Hence the unity and identity of any organism must be sought for in its soul. But this inner unity, which rises to its fullest expression in self-consciousness, is partially reflected in the body, which in its development preserves a rhythm and symmetry, which enable us to trace a resemblance in form between its various stages of evolution. Death severs the connection between soul and body as we know it here. Soul has lost its present means of self-expression. We cannot, however, therefore argue that it has gone out of existence; and, if we affirm its continued existence, our past experience of it as always manifesting its activity through a body justifies us in asserting that it will hereafter possess a body of some kind.

The argument for the survival of personality is cumulative and, surely, of great weight. No satis-

[1] Cf. Pringle-Pattison's *The Idea of Immortality*, Chaps. I and V.

factory explanation of the life of man as a moral being can be reached, if he is not heir to a future destiny. No sure basis for ethics itself can be found within the limits of the present world-order, which neither provides scope for that full moral achievement of which man is capable, nor guarantees that man's ineradicable demand for justice will be met. The doctrine of future rewards and punishments is often very crudely stated; but man as a moral being looks for some assurance that in the hereafter righteousness will be vindicated as a sovereign principle of the universe. Nor, as we have seen, can ultimate spiritual values maintain themselves, unless they are referred to God as their ground. And if they are secure in Him, being the expression of His character, must not the human person who is called to realize them by his own striving, share in the divine eternity? This large, ethico-teleological argument is reinforced by the argument derived from the teleological character of the evolutionary process, with its ordered development from the inorganic to personality. The rationality of the universe, the very character of God Himself, are challenged, if death ends all. The Christian revelation, for those who accept it, adds the culminating proof, because it sets human personality within the embrace of an Eternal Love, whose creative purpose it describes as that of calling human spirits into progressive fellowship with the great Father of all spirits.

XII

THE GOSPEL AND MODERN LIFE

By Henry Sloane Coffin, D.D.,
President of Union Theological Seminary,
New York City

A NEW Testament writer connects the adjective "everlasting" with the Gospel. The Gospel is the message concerning the Christian God and His goodwill towards the children of men. It answers a perennial longing and meets an always present need of humanity. In its essence it does not alter: it offers a Saviour who is "the same yesterday and to-day and for ever." We would not have it change, for the sins and sorrows of our race repeat themselves age after age, and no generation wishes a God other than the Father who was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, the God who is love.

But the conditions of human existence constantly change, and the necessities of men assume new forms. No doubt we tend to focus our attention upon the changes and to underestimate the extent to which our needs remain the same. And the everlasting Gospel shows its vitality and (like all other living things) its adaptability, by opening up resources which correspond with the desires of the successive generations. In the city of Trenton on the Delaware there stands

a colonial mansion on the bank of the river, equipped with a water-wheel. In the eighteenth century it was used to turn a grist-mill ; in our day it is connected with a dynamo and supplies the house with electric light and power. The Gospel, like the river, remains the same century after century, but men have differing wants which they ask it to satisfy.

When we attempt to differentiate " modern life " from the periods which have preceded our own, there seem to be four outstanding factors which sway contemporary thought and affect current human needs.

A first is the scientific attitude towards the world. It assumes that every realm of existence may be investigated, that its laws may be charted, and that it may (at least to some extent) be subjected to man's command. There is no place in its view of the universe for the irrational. Earthquakes, weather, disease, human behaviour, are phenomena to be explored, accounted for, and if possible brought under human control. The advances of the past few generations have been so spectacular that it is inevitable that we should feel ourselves on the brink of yet more momentous discoveries which will augment our powers. There are still noteworthy sections of human life which have not been subjected to scientific treatment, but the scientific method is at the basis of modern education, and more and more of the inhabitants of the earth feel that it is for them to understand and control the life they live.

A second is the generally accepted conception of democracy—that this control of life is to be exercised not by a privileged few, but by the mass of mankind. The acceptance of the democratic idea is often

theoretical. Practically it is hampered by the inequalities of opportunity and of intelligence, by the lack of effective methods for its realization, and by racial and nationalistic groupings which break up the solidarity of mankind ; but it remains a potent ideal in the minds of men. It lies at the root of the current unrest in industry, where both workers and the public are demanding their rights in the control of the processes of the production and distribution of goods. It is attempting to express itself in some international organization, which shall safeguard the rights of the weaker nations and prevent the many from becoming the victims of the ambitions of the few in another world conflict.

A third is the industrial organization of the world, making commercial pursuits the supreme interest, lodging power with those who possess access to desired raw materials and those who own the means of their transport and manufacture into marketable products, transforming governments into agencies for the pushing of national business, and stratifying mankind in classes on the basis of their economic status. Those who give history an economic interpretation will say that this is no distinctive characteristic of our time ; but the annihilation of distance, which has made the whole earth one neighbourhood, and the development of international finance, have brought within the Western capitalistic system the entire industrial life of the race. The motives and standards of capitalism are moulding the spirits of men everywhere.

A fourth is the rise of psychology—the science which explores and describes, and which attempts to

explain and modify the minds and behaviour of men. For the moment it holds the foremost place in the sphere of education, and its influence is paramount in current fiction and in the drama. Like all new movements, it is so impressed with its own importance that it fails to recognize and remain within its proper boundaries; but it has already made a large contribution towards our understanding of ourselves, and it is profoundly affecting ethical and religious ideas and the methods of education, of business and of art. In its insistence upon the large rôle played by racial instincts it has close kinship with doctrines of sin which were dominant in the Church in other centuries. In its tendency to interpret human behaviour as inevitably ruled by external stimuli it is apt to become mechanistic and materialistic, and to leave no place for spiritual religion. Unquestionably it presents the greatest difficulties to thoughtful folk to-day in the acceptance of the Christian faith. It may be either a very useful ally of the Gospel or its most serious antagonist.

Indeed these factors are all in part favourable to and in part hinder the Gospel of Christ. The scientific attitude of persistent curiosity accords with the Christian faith that there is no mystery in our Father's house permanently withheld from His children's search: "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known." He has no secrets into which men are forbid to pry. It harmonizes with the fearless assurance of Christians that everything in the universe, if rightly understood, means well to man, and can be used to minister to his fullness of life. Its patient

pursuit of truth, its open-minded welcome to facts, and its humble willingness to work with the processes of Nature, foster the spirit inculcated in several of the Beatitudes. It tends to establish men in that lordly relation to the physical universe and all its forces which characterized Jesus. He commanded winds and waves and the disturbing elements in men's minds and bodies; modern science attempts to furnish man with a similar domination.

But in making man boldly inquisitive, confident, open-minded, self-reliant, it is apt to centre attention upon things visible and tangible and to leave spiritual forces out of consideration. For vast numbers it substitutes an impersonal universe for a living God, provides no place for prayer, and sees no salvation for man except in his own intelligence and effort.

The democratic idea fits in with the Christian conviction of the brotherhood of man and of the latent capacities of the least and lowliest. It accords with the emphasis of Jesus upon the value of the common man. But practically democracies level down as well as level up, and both in politics and in industry the supreme loyalty to which appeal is made is self-interest. The collective control, carried to an extreme, as in Communism, seriously menaces human liberty and all religion. It has no room for the activity of God, and it denies His existence and exalts man to the throne of the universe.

The industrial organization of the world has probably brought more comforts to more of its inhabitants than any previous social system. It is a skilful device for answering the prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." The commercial interdependence

of the peoples theoretically should bring home the conviction that all are members one of another. Nor are the typical Capitalist virtues of initiative, diligence, foresight and thrift without value in the Christian ideal. But the touch of Occidental Capitalism upon the Orient is morally perilous. Most Christians feel that it is more difficult for them to hold loyally to their ideals in business than in almost any other realm. And out of industrial conflicts sprang the appalling catastrophe of the Great War.

Current psychology stresses the creative function of man, the dangers which lurk in his own nature, and the necessity of sublimating instincts which survive from a brute or savage past and of correcting twists which have been given in early experience. With these the Christian message easily finds itself congenial. It proclaims men co-creators with God of a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. It reminds man that "from within, out of the heart" proceed the perilous impulses. It insists that to enter into life men must become new creatures, and that always there is need "to work out salvation" relying on a constantly indwelling Spirit. But the popular effect of much of this psychology is both anti-social and anti-religious. It helps to make those who read it self-centred rather than self-emptied, renders them restive under social restraints, especially in family relations, and substitutes some process of self-education for redemption through fellowship with the living God.

When we are speaking of the Gospel and Modern Life we must interpret it in the light of these contemporary forces:

1. All our science rests upon an underlying faith; it assumes that the universe is rational, and therefore can be known, and that it is inherently good, so to understand it is to man's advantage. Many of those who confidently proclaim the scientific method the clue to successful living never examine these presuppositions. Why do they believe the world to be rational? and why is knowledge good? They may answer that the previous experience of the race raises this presumption. The Gospel would answer: "Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." It proclaims above and in and through all a God who is mind and conscience. Only on such a spiritual basis is the faith of science well grounded. Here is a fundamental accord between the assumption of science and the faith of Christian believers.

The scientific mind will have nothing to do with truth imposed by authority. A Gospel certified by an infallible Church or deduced from an infallible Book carries no convincing credentials. The scientific mind rightly insists on employing the same method to discover truth in religion which it employs in other realms. It regards religious ideas as hypotheses to be tested and verified or rejected. The God whom the Gospel announces is an hypothesis, arrived at, as all postulates are reached, as the likeliest interpretation of all the spiritual data in the experience of mankind. This hypothesis must submit itself to the two tests which we apply to all claimants upon our trust: the tests of congruity with previously ascertained facts and of practical worth. Does the God of the Gospel harmonize with our existing knowledge

of the universe? If so, of what value is He to us? The Gospel claims that He is light: does faith in Him reveal a spiritual world, and make plain to us ourselves and our fellow-men, our duties, our resources, our destiny? The Gospel claims that He is power: does faith in Him enable us to overcome the world and sin and death? The scientific attitude requires a statement of the Gospel in terms which render it not incongruous with our present interpretation of the universe, and a statement of it which allows it to win home to the minds and consciences of men with conviction and compulsion.

A generation ago the scientific attitude towards life was boldly optimistic. Charles Darwin, writing to Sir Charles Lyell, employs the phrase "Natural Selection, and as a general consequence, Natural Improvement." The world seemed fated to progress, and it was tacitly assumed that there was a correspondence between the evolutionary process and the human scale of values. But subsequent thinking, and particularly the shocking disclosure in the Great War of the hideous uses to which man can put his acquired knowledge, has rudely shaken this superficial optimism out of its confidence in the automatic progress of mankind. It is the commonplace of the hour that man's physical powers have outstripped his spiritual growth. Science no longer offers itself as a guide to life. It realizes its limitations. It can vastly augment human resources, but of itself it is incapable of assuring that they will be used for the weal of the race. There is a widespread wistfulness for something which will alter and develop the spirit of man so that he can be trusted with the mighty

forces which his science furnishes him. Investigators hold back from exploring further increases of his power lest they be loosing on the earth a more terrible calamity. A foremost physicist expresses the confidence that in radio-activity there is a treasury of force which will be unlocked in the not distant future, but he adds that he hopes that this discovery will not come until man has been sufficiently matured in character not to employ it in mutual slaughter. This chastened and wistful attitude is voiced by another, conspicuous in the realm of social investigation, who speaks of herself as "falling back for encouragement on a growing faith in the possibility of reorganizing society by the application of the scientific method directed by the religious spirit."

This opens a way for the Gospel and prepares our contemporaries to welcome it, provided that for this generation as for all its predecessors the Gospel authenticate itself as Truth and as Redeeming Power.

2. The democratic conception also rests upon an assumed faith. It demands confidence in the capacities of the ordinary man, in the power of ideals, in the universe as favourable to human brotherhood. Such confidence it is by no means easy to justify. There have always been cynics to sneer at the incurable stupidity of the common herd. The democratic experiment in politics often produces results which create an opportunity for a dictator. It is not to be expected that democratic experiments in industry will encounter less difficulties. Nor do men readily maintain their faith in the might of ideals. The reaction which immediately succeeded the Great War witnessed a general disparagement of idealists.

But the only alternative to faith in reason and conscience is belief in brute-force and cunning. Nor does our world seem patently designed to foster human fellowship. It often appears to encourage a ruthless struggle in which the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong. Our planet has undergone climatic changes in the past, and is destined to undergo others in the future, when the glaciers will again advance and reduce the portions of our globe suitable for human habitation and capable of cultivation; ultimately it will be as dead as the moon. Unless there be another dwelling-place for man, he will be as extinct as the dinosaurs. Such a prospect hardly favours enthusiastic devotion to the democratic or to any other ideal of social progress. It is amazing how many of our most publicly-minded contemporaries who cherish high hopes of human comradeship and give themselves ungrudgingly to the service of their fellows never challenge the presuppositions upon which their expectations and efforts are based. When they honestly face them, they cry out for some justification of their unconscious faith.

The Gospel in its historic Trinitarian conception of God seems to supply exactly the spiritual foundation they have assumed. It vindicates faith in the capacities of the common man by presenting One, a Carpenter in a subject race, in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form, and who offers life like His own to all who will follow Him. It asserts that ideals akin to His are not mere projections of the wishes of man but the Spirit of God in man's heart and mind. It declares that the Maker and Ruler of this and of all worlds is the Father whom

Jesus trusted, and that His faithfulness guarantees enough and to spare for the needs of His children here and for ever, if only they use His gifts in the Spirit of the ministering Son of man. God incarnate in Man, God imparting Himself through Christian men, God Creator and Providence of the universe—here is a faith upon which consecration to the democratic ideal of the control of life by the collective mind of the race can steadfastly base itself.

3. The present industrial organization of our world is manifestly not satisfactory to large numbers of its inhabitants. There is an open rebellion on the part of certain class-conscious groups among the proletariat, whose protest is partly materialistic—a cry for a larger share in the good things of life—and partly spiritual—a protest in the name of social justice. And even more significant is the discontent among those who are comfortably circumstanced and have access to all the advantages of education and culture. More and more people of the upper and middle classes feel like joining in the words of Arnold Toynbee, addressed to the poor in England:

> "You have—I say it clearly and advisedly—you have to forgive us, for we have wronged you; we have sinned against you grievously—not knowingly always, but still we have sinned, and let us confess it; but if you will forgive us—nay, whether you will forgive us or not—we will serve you, we will devote our lives to your service, and we cannot do more."

Those who most firmly believe in the present capitalistic system as the best so far discovered for getting the world's work effectively done, are frank to admit that the system of itself does not foster those virtues

which it requires for its successful operation. At gatherings of financiers and manufacturers and retailers much is said in praise of co-operation, of service, of administering business as a trust for the commonweal. But these are the ethical principles which men find it most difficult to uphold and to practise in the conditions of modern industry. The existing industrial order appears to encourage ruthless competition, gain-seeking, and selfish employment of what one controls. It needs the Gospel to supply the moral incentives by which it can be kept in vigorous health.

But the Gospel cannot be a mere handmaid to the commercial enterprises of mankind. It comes with a protest against those features in industry which are contrary to the mind of Christ. It fosters divine discontent with an order which exposes many to the ethical as well as the economic perils of casual employment, which chronically affords a considerable proportion of the population a livelihood insufficient to make possible for them and theirs a decent life, and which arrays nations, classes and individuals in economic strife. It seeks to spiritualize the social discontent: to remind men that their life consists not in the abundance of things which they possess, but in their characters, their friendly relations one with another, their spiritual resources. It applies the Spirit of Christ to existing social conditions, shows where they come short of His ideal and holds up what He would have men endeavour to make them. Above all it proclaims the living God who wills a Blessed Community, animated by the conscience of Christ, who ceaselessly spends and is spent for its establish-

ment, and who offers His empowering comradeship to His children as they dedicate themselves to bring it to pass.

4. Psychology is rendering a service in turning attention from social conditions to the thoughts and motives of individuals. It enforces the emphasis of the Gospel upon "a right spirit" as the ultimate foundation of a satisfactory community. It confirms the Christian teaching of the ill-effects of fear, and of the necessity of freeing men from it, if they are to do their work vigorously and enjoy life's pleasures. It stresses the importance of gaining a brave and mastering attitude towards circumstance and towards inhibitions. The future historian of our time will note the numerous cults—Christian Science, New Thought, Mental Science, and the like—which specialize in asserting the superiority of mind over matter, and in giving men a victorious spirit. Most of them rest upon fallacies, and are in any case exaggerations of wholesome truths. But their vogue suggests deficiencies in the Gospel as the Church has been presenting it. These cults would not have come into being, had the Christianity inculcated by the Church been "the manifold wisdom of God."

The Gospel presents a Father whose care and love evoke a trust which banishes worry and apprehensiveness and their kindred sinister thralldoms. It insists that He wills for His children strength of mind and of body adequate to the useful careers which He plans for them, and that in mastering weaknesses and in overcoming fears they have His unfailing reinforcements at their call. It declares that no brute instinct or savage passion or enslaving habit is unconquerable :

it points to One who is able to save unto the uttermost, whose grace century after century has transformed the vilest into the saintly and cravens into victors.

Psychology is doing a valuable piece of work when it studies the actions of the human spirit under religious influences, when it examines the phenomena of conversion, illumination, guidance, renewal, empowerment, sanctification. It bears witness to the reality of these experiences, and its scientific study unveils their laws and appraises their value in terms of social utility. When it goes beyond its proper sphere and attempts a mechanistic explanation of human behaviour, it is repeating the blunder of the physical scientists of a generation ago who ruled out a spiritual interpretation of the universe. Their successors refrain from such negative dogmatism, and many of them are at once thorough-going scientists and devout believers in the living God. Psychologists similarly may map out for us the processes of the mind of man, may point out to us that human nature does change and is for ever responsive to stimuli, may tell us what stimuli are mentally debasing and what ennoble, and this will make a valuable preparation for religion. The Gospel will bring to men ready to find a place for it in their outlook upon life its message of One who can make "new creatures," whose presence in the soul sheds light, who leads the mind that thoughtfully waits upon Him, who is refreshment in fatigue and serenity in distraction, who unifies and reinforces the believing heart so that it achieves that which seems impossible, in whose companionship men grow into His own likeness.

XIII

THE GOSPEL IN HUMAN SOCIETY

By W. F. Lofthouse, D.D.,
Principal, Handsworth College

IN every discussion of God's redemptive purpose, we find ourselves dealing with three familiar conceptions: the individual, the world, and the church. The individual, we say, is saved out of the world, by, and into, the church. We recognize wide differences of opinion as to the actual relation of the church to the individual in the work of his salvation, from the extreme Catholic dogma, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, to the equally extreme Protestant view (associated, curiously enough, with Newman's early religious consciousness), that nothing matters except God and the individual soul. We do not always recognize how ambiguous are both terms—church and world. The world, when men talk as theologians, is generally regarded as a mass of perishing people and institutions, doomed to final conquest or destruction; it "lies in the evil one" (1 John v. 19); the church is a group of persons who have reached safety and are organized into a society for preserving that safety, fulfilling its responsibilities and privileges, and drawing others into it. Early Christian art was wont to represent the church as a ship, a sort of life-boat,

surrounded by stormy waves from whose perils it was rescuing shipwrecked humanity, and the evangelicals of the eighteenth century thought of themselves as "brands plucked from the burning" and longed to "save poor souls out of the fire."

But the world is not just a stormy sea, engulfing the mass of humanity tossing upon it. There is much in it of beauty and goodness, virtue and kindliness. God, said the old Hebrew writer, saw that it was good; and, as the fourth evangelist put it, perhaps with the first chapter of Genesis in his mind, God loved the world, and sent His son into it, that it might be saved through Him. And few even of the more rigorous evangelicals would now regard the state as wholly evil, or hold all political activity, once at least condemned as "worldly," to be irreconcilable with sincere religion.

Nor is "church" a less ambiguous term; for, apart from the abiding ambiguity of "visible" and "invisible," no sooner do we begin to use the term in discussion than one man is found to be thinking of the great body of professed Christians now in the world, another of the religious organization to which he himself belongs, another of his own and other denominations, another of the one Christian society as it may be supposed to have existed through the ages, and so on. To one, the church is the "body of Christ" (whatever may be understood by that splendid Pauline metaphor), to another nothing more than a group or collection of groups of persons recognizing the authority of certain recorded words of Christ. What wonder if such discussions lead to no satisfactory conclusion?

A third term, placed at the head of this chapter, is perhaps more ambiguous still. We may use the term "society" for any group of persons, bound together by any ties, close or lax, or by no ties consciously felt; from a cricket club or a literary and dramatic circle, to the whole of mankind, past, present, and future. But it will be convenient to remember that, if the term is to be used with any precision at all, it must imply at least a group whose members are united by like needs, and who act together for their supply and satisfaction. Societies may be as numerous as these needs and the kinds of co-operation employed; but when we discuss a society, or even "human society" in its broadest applications, we mean something more than a sum of individuals; and more, too, than the fictitious though legal personality of a corporation. We have in mind a unity, which, though not independent of individuals, comes into a real existence from their common needs and their enforced co-operation.

The picture of the life-boat illustrates what has been the familiar attitude of Christian people in every age. Nor can we complain that in any age it has been over-emphasized. It has indeed received too little emphasis rather than too much. For whether we actually identify society with a lost and ruined world or not, it is undeniable that we are surrounded by temptations to which we are ready to give way with fatal ease (in this sense, at least, we must all accept the doctrine of original sin), and to conquer which we need the saving grace of Christ. The conception is as valuable to-day as ever, although those who are drawn into the bark of safety by the evan-

gelical appeal so often fall back into the waves, and though so many, as we must needs admit, are still struggling in the stormy sea of the world while they are supposed to be safe within the ship of the church.

All this, it may be noted, belongs to a plane of thought which is foreign to the Old Testament. There, we find a gospel which is not for the individual but for the society. The unit, the subject of God's demands, His wrath and His mercy, is for the most part the nation ; and the nation was to the Hebrew what society is to us. The prophets had no doubt of this. Israel as a whole had sinned, was being punished, and was to be led to repentance and restoration. The thought of individual responsibility was a comparatively late and tender growth. It was mentioned by Jeremiah and Ezekiel only to be forgotten again. Even in the Psalms the community is the worshipper far more often and more clearly than the individual. The general Hebrew attitude is strikingly illustrated in the story of the three alternatives from which David was allowed to make his choice after his sin of taking a census of his people : either seven years' famine, or three months' defeat, or three days' plague—all of them penalties which would fall on his subjects rather than on himself.[1] And the final word of God's grace is "*they* shall be my people and I will be their God."

Nor is this attitude foreign to the New Testament. The apostles based their teaching consciously on the promises of the old covenant. They did not narrow the scope of the ancient prophecies ; they broadened it. The spirit was to be poured out on all flesh ; the

[1] 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.

leaves of the tree of life were to be for the healing *of the nations.* The interest of Jesus, we have often been told, was in individuals ; but He was ever looking beyond them to the " Kingdom of God," in which individuals were to find their true life. In describing the Saviour's conversations with individuals, with Nicodemus, or the woman of Samaria, the fourth evangelist makes Him, as if instinctively, pass from the second person singular to the plural. Jesus, again, it is often said, came to found a church. It would be easier to agree to this than it is, but for the ambiguity noted above. That He had in mind a " Kingdom " there can, however, be no doubt. But what was the Kingdom ? Some apocalyptic new world, called in to redress the balance of the old ? As to the extent to which His words took their colour from contemporary apocalyptic expectations, scholars are still in doubt. But one thing is clear, that the Kingdom, as ruled over by the Father in Heaven, and composed of men who must needs look on each other as brothers, is the most closely-knit form of society ; not a club or a school where men hold the same opinions, but a family where men experience the same needs, and work together for their satisfaction, in a common loyalty to one another and a common obedience to their lawgiver and head.

The Kingdom of God is a society in which the Gospel, the good news of this common life, is believed, understood, and acted on. And when, in the light of Christ's death and resurrection, men saw in His teaching what hitherto they had never suspected, they saw the Kingdom as a redeemed society held together in right relations to God by the mediation

of Christ, the great Reconciler. Through His sonship they knew themselves to be sons of God. And if they dropped the term Kingdom later on, as less intelligible to the Gentile world, they substituted for it another, " ecclesia," even more suggestive of mutual responsibility and common action.

Unless our authorities are at fault, therefore, we must conclude that Jesus came into human society, as it was, in order to found within it another society, dependent for its vitality on Him, marked by the intensive fellowship or common life of a family, but meant ultimately to be co-extensive with the human race. Thus, in effect, society as we know it was to be transformed into a society where all men recognize one another as sons of a common Father, and where every possession and gift or capacity is hallowed or consecrated by being held in trust for the common good, as revealed and ordained by the Father Himself.

Such an ideal can be stated quite briefly and clearly ; but it is difficult to grasp. However ambiguous the term " world " may be, we know what it is to live in a system which is yet no system, where the relations of men to one another, and to God, have gone agley ; where our dealings with each other are overshadowed by fear and suspicion and greed, envy and hatred, and where we can only think of God (if we think of Him at all) as justly incensed with our pride and disobedience, our ill-will and lust. And we can understand the existence of small and even large groups, formed for the achievement of definite and limited purposes, and jealously bidden to respect their limitations. But a universal society, in which all

co-operate for the supply of those far-reaching needs which include the rest, is as strange and indeed inconceivable to most of us as the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven.

The ideal was equally difficult for the Early Church. The Christians of the first days, by a generous impulse, could pool and share their possessions (though this was not obligatory ; the sin of Ananias did not consist in keeping back some of his property, but in pretending that he had kept back none). But when we picture the relations within the household of Philemon, for example, or St. Paul's organization of his great relief fund for the poverty-stricken Christians in Palestine, we are reminded of the Church, as we call it, of to-day. The Christians, doubtless, gave a far readier and completer response to appeals, charitable and ethical, than others, as they do now ; but their general social life was much like that of their neighbours.

Nor could it well have been otherwise. They formed a tiny minority in their world. It was a world of slavery, gladiatorial shows, much sexual self-indulgence, striking contrasts between wealth and poverty, as ours is—we must needs confess it—a world of exploitation, sweating, gambling, and prostitution. Individuals, supported by the close companionship and high ideals of a select company, might rely on supernatural grace to keep them safe ; but a whole society from which these evils had been banished was humanly unthinkable.

Nor was the ideal treated more seriously after the conversion of the Roman Empire. What a chance was offered by that momentous event ! The kingdom

of the world was becoming, at least in name, the kingdom of God and of His Christ. The Church was to be no longer in a minority. It might now shape society according to its own demands. It could establish among men the relations which it had learnt long ago from its Master as the will of God for the world redeemed in Christ. But the chance, if it was ever real, was lost. The Church was too much occupied with consolidating its own position, settling its own heresies, and keeping in with the State. The pious thought no more than they had done in the old dark days, of transforming the world. They wished only to flee from it. The Church had formed the minority habit of mind.

We are no nearer to the ideal when we pass from the orthodoxy of the East to the Catholicism of the West. The boast of Catholicism was the Kingdom of Heaven opened to all believers. But the Catholic Church, in spite of its popes or fathers, and its friars or brothers, was not a family. It was an institution, whose membership was regarded as conterminous with all Christian nations ; all must obey the Church's law as they must obey the laws of their several States ; all must submit themselves to the Church's officials and pay the Church's dues ; all must believe what their " mother " the Church bade them believe ; and they were then assured, by the divine grace of her sacraments, of final salvation.

In its influence on the different governments of Christendom, and on society as a whole, the Church varied from time to time enormously ; but its attitude was individualistic through and through. To each individual, in its Confessional and in what we may

almost literally call its penitent form, it said, " obey and be saved." It was universal in its resolve to tolerate no possibility of opposition, and catholic in its refusal to allow of any salvation outside its own obedience ; but its dealings were with individual men and women.

Its theology, too, was individualistic, whether we think of the Augustinian " heresy " (as the Council of Trent decided Augustinianism to be) or the Semi-Pelagian " orthodoxy " ; and if it held to the Augustinian doctrine that the whole race was lost and ruined through Adam's fall, the atonement of Christ only availed for those who would follow the way pointed out by the Church. The monastic orders, indeed, offered the relief and security of a corporate life to thousands ; but every monastery bore witness to the deep-seated despair of transforming or redeeming human society. Whatever the Catholic Church might be (and if we call it a failure, it was still magnificent), it was not the kingdom of the Gospels.

Evangelicalism was equally individualist. Its proclamation of the sinner's justification by faith was a noble re-affirmation of St. Paul. But if in the eighteenth century it cried, " The world is my parish," it meant that the Gospel could and must save individuals anywhere, and however sunk in sin. It was right. But, as in the first century, its special appeal was, " Flee from the wrath to come " ; " Save yourselves from this untoward generation " ; " Come out from among them and be ye separate." In doing so, it really despaired of the world as completely as did the monks. The long-continued protest of the mediæval Church against usury and the accumulation

of wealth,[1] helpless even before the Reformation, was gradually forgotten after it, because it was really a code of individual ethics rather than an attempt to establish proper relations between members of a Christian society. The contrast, therefore, between Evangelicalism and Catholicism was not the contrast between the redemption of the individual and the redemption of society ; it was the contrast between two differing ways of assuring the individual of his salvation.

But here an objection will naturally be made Has not the Church, both Catholic and Evangelical, been the origin of great social movements and far-reaching reforms ? It is customary to point to the cessation of the brutal " games " of antiquity and of the worst offences of the old pagan society, the gradual extinction of serfdom and the wide sweep of charity in the Middle Ages, and the rise of hospitals, the extension of education, and the abolition of slavery in more modern times. That the Christian society of the West has for the last two thousand years led the world's slow advance in morality, as in social organization and in literature and art, will be generally admitted. But the historian will not exaggerate the influence of the Church. Churchmen as landowners doubtless often mitigated the rigour of serfdom ; they did not think of abolishing it.[2] Charitable endowments often owed their existence to the hope that the donor's money, however obtained and used during his life, might make some pious atonement for him

[1] For the uncompromising character of this protest, see R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*.

[2] See G. G. Coulton, *The Mediæval Village*.

after his death. Both Wilberforce and Shaftesbury found as much opposition as help from the Established Church of their country, and discovered, like Robert Owen, that the ecclesiastical authorities took but a mild interest (to say the most) in what had no direct bearing on the prestige of the Church.

But even the great social reformers, inspired as they were by ideals which the Church as a whole did not understand, stopped short. They aimed at conferring certain benefits on society, and banishing large and crying evils, rather than at transforming social relations altogether. And the same thing must be said about the deep interest in social questions which has so profoundly influenced the life and thought of the Church in this country in the last generation. The great social movement of our own day, which has effected the bold advance of education, the vigorous attack on the evils of unemployment and bad housing, the system of old age pensions and of health insurance, and the strikingly fruitful attention to infant welfare, together with the campaigns against alcohol, gambling, and impurity, has called for fresh services to individuals or fresh restrictions upon their conduct; but it has not been the less individual because it has demanded reforms applicable to all individuals in society. The rules may have been modified; the game goes on. It would be hard to maintain that the general conception and ordering of social relations is any more distinctively Christian than it was in the first century.

To say all this is not to deny the immense improvements that have taken place in the life of Christendom.

Few persons who know anything of the history of the past would seriously prefer to live in any other age than the present. Taking a broad view, the general standards of morality and of social service (of "justice" and "mercy," to use the fine Old Testament words) are higher than ever before. But Christianity stands for more than conduct of a certain kind, however altruistic. This is clear from the two great commandments in which Jesus summed up the law and the prophets. These have often been interpreted as if they were independent—"it is our duty to repent of our sins, to worship God and to join the Church; and also to be philanthropic and kindly; but we must remember that the second without the first can never be enough." But love is more than giving, either on the part of God to man, or on the part of man to God or to his fellow-men. Love desires a response. It demands as much as it gives. No greater demands were ever made from men than were made by Jesus. The goal of love is reconciliation, harmony, co-operation. This is equally clear whether we think of its exposition in the parable of the Prodigal Son or in the great triumphal act accomplished on the Cross. Love desires, as we say, the real good of all men, rich and poor, good and bad, alike; and this real good does not consist in an increase either in the possessions or the comforts and amenities of life (how quickly these may be lost, the "Rich Fool" discovered), but in fellowship between man and man—that is, the sharing of all that has any true value; the attitude of alliance, co-operation, trust—that is, a society wherein dwells righteousness. This does not mean that some redistribution

of goods [1] and possessions is unnecessary or inadvisable, and that actual poverty should not ask to be relieved. The temptations of poverty are more cruel than those of wealth. To regard the good life as a matter of right relations, where social values are made available for all, and where the justification of property lies in the use to which it is or can be put, would probably mean in the end a far more drastic attack on poverty than either charity or social legislation has yet envisaged. To aim at this, indeed, is not only to love men but to love God ; for what else can God desire but a society wherein men, recognizing Him as their common Father, in whose will is their peace, join together to live the common life which He has ordained and prepared for them ?

It is necessary here to guard against a misunderstanding. What has just been said may seem, to some, to point to a simple amelioration of society, a reduction of Christianity to a rather more thoroughgoing scheme for social reform, as if Christ had merely bidden us "love and be happy." It neglects, we may be told, the corruption of man's heart. The Gospel, we shall be reminded, deals with a tragedy, personal and individual, the tragedy of sin. Why else was the Cross a necessity ? Why was not Jesus satisfied with the kindly activities of Galilee and the gentle precepts of the Sermon on the Mount ? To

[1] This phrase must not be taken to suggest the identification of the Gospel with some form of Socialism. Christianity is tied down to no one economic system. But it surely ought to tolerate none which in practice debars many individuals from every chance of health of body and mind, decency, the enjoyment of nature, and the knowledge and worship of God.

forget "love's redeeming work," the Passion and death on the tree, is to reduce Christ to the level of Confucius. We neglect the individual at our peril. Repentance and redemption are individual affairs, and no enthusiasm for society can take their place.

Now all this as far as it goes is perfectly true. It was human sin that brought Christ to the Cross. But what is meant by sin? The deliberate defiance of some known law of God? So it may usually be regarded in the study or the pages of theological text-book. Such acts of deliberate defiance have been constantly performed; but they are far from exhausting the evils in society, or even the acts that we commonly call sinful. No one can be quite ignorant of monsters of iniquity whose rule is "evil, be thou my good." But the majority of evil acts proceed from perplexingly mixed motives. Temptations shake the will and confuse the judgment. Psychology reveals the baffling influence of the sub-conscious and the forgotten experiences of the past. Conscience itself would appear to refer us to the varying moral standards of different social groups, often distressingly lax and accommodating. Heredity and early habituation make one man's virtue another's vice. Mental conflict will produce crime as well as misery. The thief and the prostitute, the gambler and the profiteer, may all, to one who knows them, be as much the victims as the curses of the conditions in which they live. And is there no responsibility attaching to those who tolerate these conditions, and are content that some men should find the virtue of unselfishness as hard on 'Change, as others find the virtues of purity and self-control in the slums? When once

we try to fix responsibility for sin, either in the magistrate's court, the psychologist's clinic, or the revivalist's inquiry room, we find it impossible to isolate the individual from the social conditions in which he has grown up.

At this point we may observe a characteristic of the teaching of Christ which has rarely received adequate attention. No one can fail to notice His mild and gentle treatment of the adulteress or the publican as compared with the rigour of his invectives against the Pharisee. To our conventional judgment, the former would seem to need far severer condemnation than the latter. Why was the verdict of Jesus so different? Surely because He thought more of attitudes than acts. It was the mental attitude of the Pharisee which was so supremely wrong. That attitude, in our modern language, we should describe as unsocial; the attitude of men who "devoured widows' houses and for a pretence made long prayers," who laid heavy burdens on others (such burdens as, perhaps, life might be when lived in a court of filthy back-to-back houses with a gin-shop and a brothel at its only entrance), and refused to touch them with one of their fingers; who were content that others, knowing not the law, should be accursed, while they could preserve their own holiness. To have and not to share was, in the eyes of Jesus, the fatal sin. If any evil needed repentance and, unrepented of, would bring punishment, it was that.

Sin, then, is not simply a wrong act but a wrong attitude, a wrong relation to God and to man; the relation of a slave to a master whom he dislikes and fears, of a rebel to a ruler whom he hates and disobeys,

of a prodigal to the father whom he has despised and defied. It is also, among men, the attitude of fear, suspicion, dislike, and greed; the refusal to co-operate and to share, the resolve, consciously or unconsciously formed, to regard others, not as ends, but as means. Repentance is thus much more widely necessary than it is often conceived to be. It is not that the other and grosser sins, for which society must bear its share of the blame, do not need repentance. They do. But repentance means properly the turning from an old attitude of mind to a new one; the acceptance of a new set of values, a new conception of my relation to my neighbours, and of theirs to me. It is more than the recognition of new duties, to myself or to others. And it issues in the conviction that the only thing which matters in the sight of God is the life that brings others nearer to God.

But we may look at the matter from another angle. A redeemed individual needs a redeemed society in which to function. A godly life cannot be lived, save in an unhappy and mutilated fashion, in a godless society. Goodness demands a good world. Otherwise, temptation may be cruelly severe. We are all involved in the sins of the world in which we live. We may regard as sinful the resort to war, the employment of force, the payment of a sweated wage, the exploitation of native races; but no system of passive resistance, no protest of conscientious objection, will keep us clear from participation in these sins. We may deplore and condemn an organization of industry and commerce which spells ruthless competition between producers and deep-seated hostility between Capital and Labour. The saints have felt all

this, and in despair have tried to escape to a world of their own, or have lamented that they must dwell in Meshech and in the tents of Kedar. But the immense problem remains for the statesman, the employer, the shop-steward ; for the Christian in South Africa or the Southern States of America, who has to find some solution to the Colour question ; or the English investor whose money is locked up in a business whose mortality he distrusts ; or even the voter who finds that the policy of every party rouses now his approval and now his horror. Doubtless there are heroic souls who can rise above most of the limitations of their time, and who will surrender everything rather than be false to their convictions. But for most of us the issue is rarely a simple one, and the surrender involves disloyalty to the interests of some who are dependent on us, and whose welfare we cannot lightly set aside. And in any case, how much easier it is for a diplomatist to approach the Christian standard when the "Locarno spirit" is abroad ; for an employer to feel at ease in reading the New Testament when he has a Whitley Council or an efficient Trade Conciliation Board with which to work ; or for a teacher to set about "feeding Christ's lambs" when he has behind him an enlightened education and after-care policy.

It is indeed impossible to live, to any satisfactory extent, in right relations to others unless the relationships are mutual. To be a good son, in the full sense of the term, means that the son must also have a good father. To be a good neighbour, with all the give-and-take that this involves, implies the existence of neighbourliness in others. "If I, your lord and

master," as Jesus said, while instituting the "neglected sacrament" of the feet-washing, "have washed your feet, ye also owe it," not to wash the feet of others, but to wash one another's feet. The end of all service to others must be to produce character in them, to accomplish for the object of our service both the situation and the attitude in which he, too, is ready to enter into the fellowship, the devotion and self-forgetting love which is the will of God for all the children of men. The end of the Gospel, we see once more, is a redeemed society, whose members are in right relations to God and to one another.

So understood, the Gospel is a direct challenge to all who accept it from the lips of their Master. The world in which they live is "perishing," because it is a system of vicious relationships whose selfishness and rivalry and strife are, as Plato saw, self-destructive and suicidal. It is "conquered" by faith, because acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God, the inspiration and fulfilment of the right attitude to God and man, sets up in the believer, and, through him, in others also, the new society and kingdom wherein is life and peace. If then the social gospel is rightly interpreted, it will mean far more strenuous effort than before; profound dissatisfaction with a merely individual salvation; the recognition, in fact, that individual salvation, if salvation means entrance into the full life of fellowship, is impossible. But a closer study of history will lead to a modification of the view that the redemption of society is wholly conditioned by individual efforts. The history of society has been the history of a series of refusals to

tolerate anti-social practices and aims. And more is needed to explain this than the work of prophets and reformers. Whether we contemplate the tribal jealousies and warfares of antiquity, the vast selfishness that overwhelmed the decadent empire of Rome, the ignorance and reckless brutality of the Dark Ages, the outbreak of individual self-assertion at the Reformation, the newer industrialism which, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, claimed that private self-seeking would produce public prosperity, built its "dark Satanic mills," multiplied the savagery of its criminal laws and treated the "labouring poor" whom it created either as idlers or criminals—we might well suspect that the task of the reformer or the prophet would be hopeless. But we should be mistaken. There have always, indeed, been the seven thousand who would not bow the knee to Baal. But more than this, reflection points to a real activity of the Spirit of God in human affairs. The pious Israelite, pondering over the astonishing survival of his own nationality and faith, in a world of triumphant idolatries, cried out, "Not unto us but unto Thy name be the glory." And the historian must recognize that in every age there has been a force, and a will, making for social righteousness, raising the standard of social conduct, weakening and destroying the old forms of oppression and wrong. It is not possible here to discuss the boundary between the action of the Spirit and human efforts after progress. Perhaps no boundary line is to be drawn. God works in men as well as independently of them. But we can assert that, apart from all considerations of interest, enlightened or narrow, and all authoritative

commands and appeals that might have been held influential enough to move large masses of men, the forces that make for disintegration have been kept in check, and, however slowly, subordinated to the gradual advance of social harmony. What T. H. Green taught us to think of as the common good, now in smaller and now in larger groups, has penetrated one stronghold of arbitrary power after another, and some real social justice has lived, not only in the vision of the prophet or the dialectic of the philosopher, but in the actual institutions of mankind.[1]

In other words, we have to deal with a gospel *in* human society as well as with a gospel *for* human society. For if, firstly, social justice is the functioning of individuals and groups in harmony with each other, each finding his own interest in co-operating for the interest of all, and each proving the worth of his own possessions in sharing them with others; and if, secondly, this functioning is an expression of the life which Jesus came to bestow upon men, or of the Kingdom which He came to found, then we must conclude that His saving power has really been at work in the world, and that the Spirit has always been carrying on the work of Jesus among men, that they may be reconciled.

Here we reach the culmination of our discussion. For reconciliation is the central word of the New Testament and of Christianity. What we call the Atonement (thinking of it, often, as a great theological mystery), is nothing, as St. Paul's Greek word

[1] Cf. T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book III; L. T. Hobhouse, *Social Justice*.

reminds us, but Reconciliation. The Gospel, whether we think of it as *for* the individual or *in* human society, is the gospel of Reconciliation. And, for men, to live as reconciled means to live in abiding right and harmonious relations with one another. The great Reconciler is Christ. And if, in the Cross of Christ, as St. Paul says, the age-long enmity of Jew and Gentile was slain, every other enmity finds there its term and abolition. Through the Cross is founded the new society where men are to each other as brothers, the sons of the one Father in Heaven. That is the society into which the jarring combative societies of our own day are to be and are being transformed. It was much, and it will ever be much, to think of Christ as the Saviour of the sin-sick soul. It is even more to remember that it was the Father's good pleasure "through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, whether things on earth or things in the heavens."

XIV

THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD

By Canon Garfield H. Williams,
O.B.E., M.B., B.S.,
Secretary of the Missionary Council of the
National Church Assembly

I

IN an earlier essay in this volume Dr. Cave points out that it is impossible for the Christian to accept the final dictum of Troeltsch that we have no right to suppose that there will be any "conversion or transformation" from the great cultural religions to Christianity, and that all that can be hoped for is "a measure of agreement and of mutual understanding."

The Christian of to-day, while not denying that there may be false accretions which tend sometimes to hide the essentials of Christianity, believes that his religion embodies the truth, and it would be an "absurd personal self-conceit" on his part to imagine that the non-Christian peoples of the world were incapable of recognizing that truth; and it surely almost amounts to a gratuitous insult to those who hold other faiths to suggest, as some do, that "every religion is best for those who practise it" unless all

religions are equally true, which is manifestly nonsense unless all religions are wholly false.

Christianity claims to be the world religion just because it claims to be true, and, if for no other reason, the Christian must propagate the Gospel because he sees no hope for any finally adequate comprehension of its full significance until all types of people all over the world have had the opportunity of giving their contribution to its interpretation.

Christ either is or is not the Redeemer of the world. If He is, we shall never truly understand His redemptive work until it operates in the whole world.

The Holy Spirit is to lead us into all truth, and it will surely be as He illuminates the minds of the peoples of all nations that we shall begin to discover the truth in all its fullness.

Christ's Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the aim of Christianity is nothing less than that the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Behind Troeltsch's dictum may have been the feeling that missionary work in so far as it is merely destructive of all that is characteristic in the thought and life of those who hold allegiance to other great religions is doomed to failure, but if so, the missionary work of the Church is doomed to failure just because and in so far as it is something less than Christian. But in point of fact the history of the Church from the age of St. Paul until the present day suggests that however insular and narrow the missionary may be, in the long run the tendency is for Christianity to absorb, and in the process of absorption to clarify the truer elements of the religions and philosophies

with which it comes into contact. This is just what we should expect, for nowhere has God left Himself without a witness, and indeed it is the religious and not the irreligious among the followers of other faiths who all down the ages have been attracted to Christianity and have desired to relate their own experience of God to some deeper, truer experience which they have dimly perceived in the followers of Christ.

II

The evangelization of the world is not a process of conversion of multitudes of people to a faith which is, as it were, a finished product conceived of as being in its entirety the possession of the evangelist; surely it is rather the winning of the allegiance of all people to a person and that person is Jesus Christ. All that the missionary has to do is as truly as he can and in any way that he can to proclaim Christ. In doing this, by word and life and sacrament what he aims at is to bring those with whom he comes in contact into touch with Jesus Christ and under the influence of His Spirit. Any conversions that may supervene must be the work of the Holy Spirit or they are not conversions to Christianity. Forced conversions, whether at the point of the sword, or as a result of Government action of one sort and another, or brought about by any form of terrorization, no matter in what religious guise it masquerades, or even from the effect of dominating personalities, are, in so far as the domination is the whole content of the conversion, all fraudulent conversions to Christianity, whatever they may be conceived to be in the case of

other religions. The Holy Spirit may use the words and acts of the missionary in the work of conversion, but He is not confined to them. He may even sometimes use the most unexpected and unlikely channels for His operations ; but He always makes His own original contribution to the conversion of each individual and He illuminates each separate mind that is subjected to His influence. Because the result is not always precisely what the missionary or his critic expected or desired, we are neither to assume that the missionary's work has been a failure or the conversion unreal. The convert, if he has really been brought into touch with Christ and His Spirit, has been brought into touch with vast creative forces. Only the genius of Omnipotence can foresee the ultimate result in each particular case.

III

If the whole world were suddenly to become Christian in the sense of blind acceptance of the religion of the Western world, it might well be that no greater disaster could happen. Do we really want men and women to be converted merely to our own very partial views of Christ and the Church and our own feeble ways of living the Christian life and our own imperfect worship of God ? Surely not, and yet much of our talk and a good deal of our action would seem to imply just that.

Is there any one of us who has the temerity to believe that he has so understood the mind of Christ as to be able adequately to interpret Him to the world ? Is it not rather the fact that we are each of us so overwhelmingly conscious of the defects of our

own personal understanding and practice of Christianity that this consciousness becomes the chief reason why we tend to fall back upon some "oracular" form of authority—either that of the Bible or the Church, or even that of a dominating personality?

This resort to "oracular" authority, however, does not carry us very far. As knowledge grows "from more to more," even when, as is not always the case, reverence increases concomitantly, oracular utterances tend rather to increase than to allay the questioning spirit. Sooner or later we have to face the fact that the Bible lends itself to varieties of interpretation which increase rather than decrease as time passes and more and more minds take part in its interpretation; and as for the "oracular" authority of the Church, if we must rest upon that, then we are driven inevitably to that branch of the Church which is most "oracular," namely the Roman allegiance, and all that it stands for; and that for most of us means intellectual suicide.

All this may seem very pessimistic, but is it really so? Why should we imagine that the evangelization of the world aims at the visible domination of the world by a single system, still less by a single polity? Nay, is it not rather the fact, as we have suggested above, that what we aim at in the evangelization of the world is primarily the winning of personal allegiance to Jesus Christ, and is it not quite certain that if Jesus Christ is God Incarnate, to grasp Him in His fullness will ever be beyond human reach, and inevitably parts of that fullness will be understood by some and other parts by others?

There is, however, another side to this question.

The little that we have understood of God Incarnate, the faint illuminations of His Spirit to which we have attained, however small they are, are at least our contribution to the whole, and it is for us to give them, however small they are, to make up the world's whole contribution to its comprehension of itself and God. In our worship of the Godhead we are still most of us groping in the outer courts of His Sanctuary. Into the Holy of Holies we hardly dare hope to go ; but are we therefore never to make our contribution to the worship of the Godhead ? But again, who are we that we should demand of our brethren of other races and other traditions that they should necessarily travel Godward precisely along the paths that we have traversed or take up their stand close to us and worship in just the way we do ? But this again suggests a partial view. Is our contribution simply our personal contribution ? If it is, we should not have enough self-confidence to give it. But we are not alone. There is already a vast company of us in a long succession down the ages who, in spite of the individuality of each of us, have a large measure of experience which we hold in common. We have great traditions behind us, and we of the present day are in a succession with many who all down the ages have sought to understand and to follow Jesus, and have discovered in Him incarnate Deity, who have received in some measure the illumination of His Spirit. Each one of us in this great company stands for a whole body of belief and practice. Our views are really ours, but they are much more than merely ours. They are ours as members of a great society and inheritors of a great

tradition. The Christ we preach is the Christ of a great company who came before us and a great company who stand beside us. He and so much that pertains to Him comes to us as a heritage from the past and as a heritage we pass it on. We are not alone. There is a great cloud of witnesses. We may choose to forgo part of the heritage—we cannot avoid exercising "the awful majesty and dignity of choice" even in this—but if we reject part of that heritage, we must surely do so in fear and trembling. It is not a little thing that we have in our possession the spiritual gifts of the past to transmit to the future. The reckless individualist who flouts tradition is usually an unpleasant egotistical flamboyant creature in whatever walk of life you find him; but when his operations are in the realm of religion he is usually either an insufferable prig, or a prophet, and prophets are rare.

IV

None the less all Christians have not the same traditions, for there have been prophets in every age and each prophet tends to make a fresh tradition. In modern times here in Britain the evangelical revival has had its prophets, men with the authentic voice; but then so later on did the Oxford Movement. A greater prophet than either of these movements produced in their day will doubtless some day arise and succeed in synthesizing the best results of both movements; but in the meantime there are separate camps, groups with somewhat different traditions, and although both groups have far more in common than they have that separates, it is inevitable that their

members should give the greatest stress to the ideas that separate, and it is perhaps well they should, for that way, the way of re-thinking and of trial and error, is the way of enlightenment, the way of fresh discovery of truth. To-day the whole body of believers in Jesus Christ, in spite of so much that is held in common, is divided up into an almost endless number of groups, representing many different traditions, passing on to posterity an amazing diversity of views.

It is impossible to deny that this disunion seriously retards the work of evangelization. In some parts of the world, indeed, it makes the acceptance of Christianity almost an impossibility, but it is not wholly a bad thing. Is it not possible that a certain variety of view and expression is in actual fact a real safeguard ? For one thing, it prevents our dominating Africa and the East with a purely Western Christ. In the end it will make it impossible for those who give their allegiance to Jesus Christ in India or Africa to give their allegiance to any but their own Christ. The worship of God which they will develop they will develop with knowledge of our differing methods, but they will always have the feeling that they must pick and choose between the methods we set before them.

V

But there is something more than a common heritage, something more than what, after all, in spite of all our diversity of emphasis, is a common tradition which makes the evangelist confident to give his message. There is the fact of Christ. Christianity is in its essence not the missionary's own invention ;

neither is it the invention of his predecessors. It is grounded in an historical personage. The Church may have elaborated upon what was given, but the Church did not take the initiative. The initiative has always been with God, and it still remains with God. The Church did not create the Christ. The Christ created the Church, and remains its Head. The final authority is always God in Christ, a living, creative God, working in and through a living, creative Christ, in a living body which is His Church and which is inspired by His life-giving Spirit. We may fail and in our failure delay the consummation of God's work; but in the end God does not fail. The old Israel gives place to the new; but God's purposes are inviolable. Nations and men fail Him and He replaces them by others; always He is at work; and in the end His purposes fail not.

VI

More and more it surely is becoming clear that Christianity is destined to be the world religion or it is destined to disappear. The deliberate attempt seriously to set about the evangelization of the world is at once the only hope of the Church, as it certainly seems to be the only hope for the world, and is it not true that the realization of these two facts is the most significant and hopeful thing in the religious life of to-day? We may in these days be less certain than we were as to what are the essentials of our faith; and we are certainly more doubtful than in former times of the validity of many of our Christian institutions; but we are more certain than we ever were that Christ is the one hope of the world, and we are beginning to

realize that it is only by seriously confronting the world with Him that we shall regain our certainty as to who and what He really is. Less and less do we pin our faith either to the complete adequacy of traditional interpretations or to the capacity of our own minds successfully to reformulate those traditions, but we have not lost our faith in Christ and we are certain that however we explain Him and His work, He is more than all we ever hoped He might prove to be and His creative force in the world whenever it is liberated must be invincible. We are sadly conscious of our incapacity to liberate the spiritual forces that we believe to be resident and we know ought to be operative in His Church, but we have no disposition to throw the blame for the failure upon any but ourselves. We know the failure is not with Christ.

VII

We look at the world around us to-day and we are amazed to realize that we can see it all as never before in history. That in itself is surely a revelation of God's purposes. We do not believe that this wider, clearer vision comes to us just haphazard. We believe its arrival means something which it is of the first importance we should understand. We do not understand just why the world should have to wait until this age in which we live before it became so changed as to make each part of it accessible to every other part ; but we do not for a moment believe that the almost sudden unification of the world that has come about in our day is a merely fortuitous happening. This almost sudden expansion of the Western world, this breaking down of the barriers that for centuries

had separated nation from nation, this flooding of Africa and the East with all the thought and activity and aspiration of the Western world—these things must have some relation to the vast purposes of God. Is it nothing that in this age in which we live we are made to witness the incredibly rapid growth of African nationality out of a welter of primitive tribes which before our day were practically untouched by the movements of the outside world? Is it nothing that we see to-day practically the whole of India and the Far East in the throes of a Renaissance which both in respect of the rapidity of its progress and the massive character of the changes it produces and the size of the area in which it operates has not only never before been witnessed in history, but which was literally inconceivable at any previous period of history?

Is it nothing that the vast Moslem world, stretching from the Atlantic coasts of Africa to far-off China and the East Indies and from the great rivers of Russia and Siberia to the heart of Africa and the confines of the Indian Ocean, has in these last few years begun to open its doors everywhere to the disintegrating influences of the Western world? Is it nothing that our own people are to-day to be found everywhere throughout the habitable globe carrying with them all the terrific forces of thought and action with which they have become endowed in this last century of amazing activity, and wherever they go introducing the explosively educative force of their own ideals and aspirations? They tunnel the mountains and they bridge the rivers. They carve their way through jungle and desert, bring water to the waterless places,

drain the waterlogged areas, turn the barrier of the sea into a highway, make the air carry their messages. But what is far more important than all these things, everywhere as they come into contact with the peoples of other races they enlarge minds, develop personalities, break down the old, build up the new ; tribal sanctions topple to pieces ; ancient superstitions disappear ; ancient faiths disintegrate ; old ways of life and thought and action are discarded and a new life develops.

The development of this new life is fraught with very grave dangers. Depopulation and disintegration of communal life almost always follow where contacts are made with primitive peoples ; and where, on the other hand, contacts are made with peoples who possess ancient civilizations, a rapidly growing national self-consciousness supervenes which often exhibits dangerous manifestations. In many parts of the world peoples are going through what may be described as a period of national adolescence. It is naturally the outward manifestations of these profound changes which are most obvious and most arresting ; but the movement in its essence is taking place in the minds and hearts of men. It is a movement of the Spirit. All the world to-day sees that the greatest need of the world is that this vast movement in the minds and hearts of men should be guided and controlled so that it becomes constructive and not merely destructive ; so that all these multitudinous forces that are re-shaping the peoples of all nations should be controlled by some vaster and utterly beneficent force.

Who shall lead this turbulent mass of developing humanity into the paths of righteousness and peace ?

Is there any hope apart from the leadership of Jesus of Nazareth? Can we dragoon the whole world into the paths of righteousness and peace? We might perchance dragoon a tribe or a nation into a group of more or less law-abiding citizens, living a listless, apathetic life; but we cannot, if we would, dragoon a world.

The only way to the attainment of this righteousness and peace is the way of love, and that way and the Truth and the Life is Christ.

And while we propound our theories as to the nature of His Person, and while we wrangle concerning the character of His Church and the method of His worship, and while we fight over His body broken and His blood outpoured, He waits for us to give Him to the world, for without us it seems He does not will to meet the world's need, since in this present dispensation the Church is His body. But how long will He wait for the Church to act? How long can love such as His wait for the Church to act?

VIII

It must be freely admitted that the work of the missionary in the task of world evangelization has often been open to grave criticism, and mistakes are not likely to be less frequent in the future. For his task is one of immense difficulty. The majority of missionaries have too little acquaintance with the languages and the cultures of the peoples whom they seek to evangelize. This is more true to-day than it ever was. The earlier missionaries often did not have the educational advantages and the careful training of the modern missionary, but they more than made

up for that by the fact that difficulties of communications made their furloughs less frequent than is the case to-day, when their homes in the Western world are so much more accessible. Moreover there were so few of their fellow-countrymen in the mission fields in which they worked that their contacts with the peoples they came to evangelize were necessarily much more intimate than is usual in these days when the missionary is seldom the only white man and is often one of a considerable company of compatriots. It is important to realize that while the rapid increase in the development of communications apparently makes the missionary's work more easy, in actual fact it tends to make it more superficial, and this is the more serious in that through innumerable contacts with the Western world, the whole character of the missionary's work is changing with the massive changes which are taking place in the minds of the peoples among whom he works. The missionary was never in greater danger than he is to-day of mistaking a veneer of Western culture for true Christianization. This danger is enhanced by the fact that very many white administrators and traders do not like true Christianization. A speaker at the British Association Meetings in 1926 stated that "it was not the Christianized Bantus who would reconcile their people to continued white dominance," and he was right. The fact is Christianity is a revolutionary religion, and if our aim in preaching Christ is to make subject races more docile, then we are going the wrong way to work. We must preach some other gospel than that of Christ. For the truth of Christianity makes men free, and the more

men become the servants of Christ the more they will demand freedom. Fortunately the more far-sighted of our administrators to-day are anxious above all else that our contacts with other people shall bring to them an enlargement of personality and a growth of freedom, but we must expect that this will be the ideal only of the more far-sighted. From the rest we must expect continued and increasingly violent criticism of the missionary's work. This will do no harm if it makes us more critical of our own work.

IX

Never before in history has the preacher of the Evangel had a more important and a more difficult task than he has to-day throughout the world. Perhaps the greatest danger of all is that the Church at home should just tinker and trifle with the task of world evangelization instead of concentrating upon it all its treasures of mind and heart and will. It is, therefore, important that it should have some clear idea as to what the cost of the evangelization of the world is likely to be. This cost has been revealed to us in a way which makes under-estimation to anyone who cares to think, an impossibility. The cost to God was indicated on Calvary, and said Christ to those who played with the idea of becoming His followers: "If anyone wishes to follow me let him deny himself and take up his cross and so follow me."

Made and Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., Frome and London

BR50
.M3 Marchant, J.
AUTHOR
The future of Christianity.
TITLE

DATE DUE	BORROWER'S NAME

BR
50
.M3

A